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THE
DRAMATIC WORKS
OF
William Shakspeare.

WITH
SIXTY ENGRAVINGS ON WOOD,
BY JOHN THOMPSON;
FROM
DRAWINGS BY STOTHARD, CORBOULD, HARVEY, ETC.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOL. X.

ROMEO AND JULIET. HAMLET. OTHELLO.

CHISWICK :

PRINTED BY C. AND C. WHITTINGHAM.

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DRAMATIC WORKS

OF

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

WITH

NOTES,

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED,

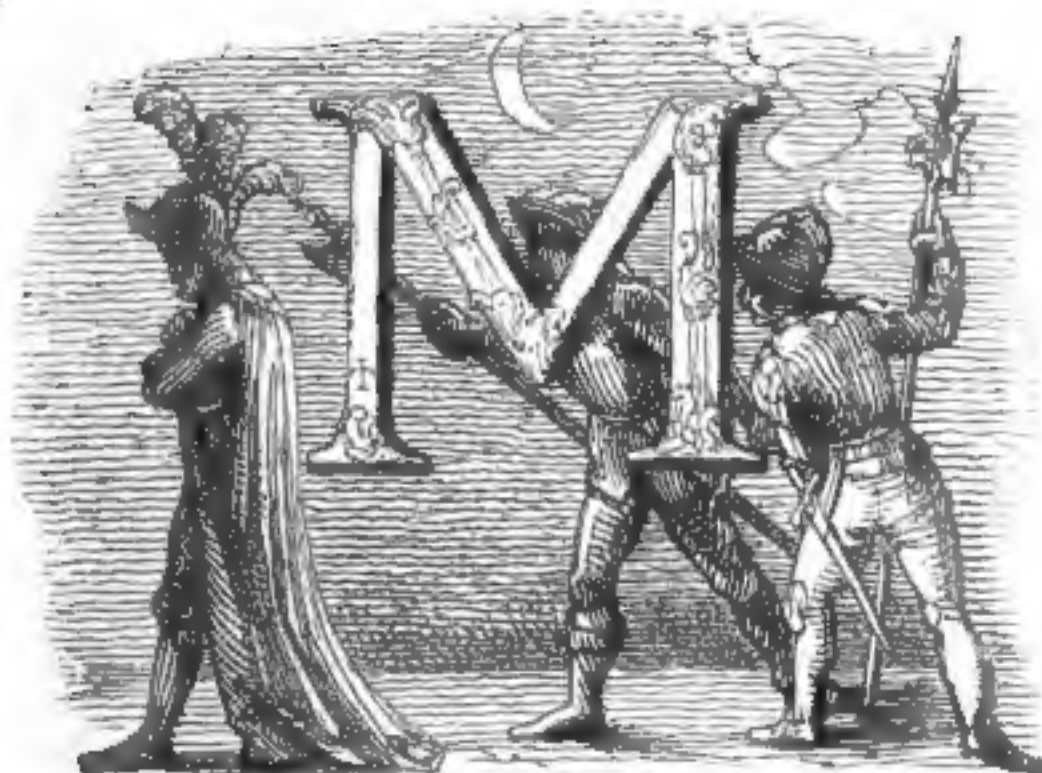
BY SAMUEL WELLER SINGER, F. S. A.

AND

A LIFE OF THE POET,

BY CHARLES SYMMONS, D. D.

VOL. X.



Hamlet. Act I. Sc. 1.

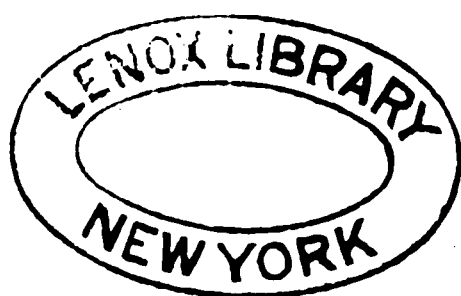
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CHISWICK :

CHARLES WHITTINGHAM, COLLEGE HOUSE.

1826.

C. W. H.



ROMEO AND JULIET.



Romeo. In faith, I will :—Let me peruse this face;
Mercutio's kinsman, noble county Paris.

ACT V. SC. 3.

FROM THE CHISWICK PRESS.

1896.

Romeo and Juliet.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

THE original relater of this story appears to have been Luigi da Porto a gentleman of Vioenza, who died in 1529. His novel seems not to have been printed till some years after his death; being first published at Venice, in 1535, under the title of '*La Gialietta*': there is, however, a *dateless* copy by the same printer. In the dedication to Madonna Lucina Savorgnana, he tells her that the story was related to him by one of his archers, named PEREGRINO, a native of Verona, while serving in Friuli, to beguile the solitary road that leads from Gradisca to Udine.

Girolamo della Corte, in his History of Verona, relates it circumstantially as a true event, occurring in 1203 *; but Maffei does not give him the highest credit as an historian: he carries his history down to the year 1560, and probably adopted the novel to grace his book. The earlier annalists of Verona, and above all Torello Sarayna, who published, in 1542, '*Le Historie e Fatti de Veronesi nell Tempi d'il Popolo e Signori Scaligeri*,' are entirely silent upon the subject, though some other domestic tragedies grace their narrations.

As to the origin of this interesting story Mr. Douce has observed that its material incidents are to be found in the *Ephesiacs* of Xenophon of Ephesus, a Greek romance of the middle ages; he admits, indeed, that this work was not published nor translated in the time of Luigi da Porto, but suggests that he might have seen a copy of the original in manuscript. Mr. Dunlop, in his History of Fiction, has traced it to the thirty-second novel of Massuccio Salernitano, whose '*Novellino*,' a collection of tales, was first printed in 1476. The hero of Massuccio is named

* Captain Breval, in his Travels, tells us that he was shown at Verona what was called the tomb of these unhappy lovers; and that, on a strict inquiry into the histories of Verona, he found that Shakspeare had varied very little from the truth, either in the names, characters, or other circumstances of this play. The fact seems to be, that the invention of the novelist has been adopted into the popular history of the city, just as Shakspeare's historical dramas furnish numbers with their notions of the events to which they relate.

Mariotto di Giannozza, and his catastrophe is different; yet there are sufficient points of resemblance between the two narratives. Mr. Boswell observes, that 'we may perhaps carry the fiction back to a much greater antiquity, and doubts whether, after all, it is not the tale of Pyramus and Thisbe, enlarged and varied by the luxuriant imagination of the novelist.'

The story is also to be found in the second volume of the *Novels of Bandello* (Novel ix.); and it is remarkable that he says it was related to him, when at the baths of Caldera, by the Captain Alexander PEREGRINO, a native of Verona; we may presume the same person from whom Da Porto received it: unless this appropriation is to be considered supposititious. The story also exists in Italian verse; and I had once a glance of a copy of it in that form, but neglected to note the title or date, and had not time for a more particular examination. It was translated from the Italian of Bandello into French, by Pierre Boistean, who varies from his original in many particulars; and, from the French, Painter gave a translation in the second volume of his *Palace of Pleasure*, 1567, which he entitled *Rhomeo and Julietta*. From Boistean's novel the same story was, in 1562, formed into an English poem, with considerable alterations and large additions, by Arthur Brooke; this poem the curious reader will find reprinted entire in the *Variorum* editions of Shakspeare: it was originally printed by Richard Tottel, with the following title: 'The Tragicall Hystorye of Romeus and Juliet, written first in Italian, by Bandell; and nowe in English, by Ar. Br.' Upon this piece Malone has shown, by unequivocal testimony, that the play was formed: numerous circumstances are introduced from the poem, which the novelist would not have supplied; and even the identity of expression, which not unfrequently occurs, is sufficient to settle the question. Steevens, without expressly controverting the fact, endeavoured to throw a doubt upon it by his repeated quotations from the *Palace of Pleasure*. In two passages, it is true, he has quoted Painter, where Brooke is silent; but very little weight belongs to either of them. In one there is very little resemblance; and in the other the circumstance might be inferred from the poem, though not exactly specified. The poem of Arthur Brooke was republished in 1587, with the title thus amplified:—'Containing a rare Example of true Constancie: with the subtill Counsell and Practices of an old Fryer, and their ill Event.'

In the preface to Arthur Brooke's poem there is a very curious passage, in which he says, 'I saw the same argument lately set foorth on stage with more commendation then I can looke for (being there much better set forth then I have or can dooe).' He has not, however, stated in what country this play was represented: the rude state of our drama, prior to 1562, renders it

improbable that it was in England. ‘ Yet (says Mr. Boswell), I cannot but be of opinion that Romeo and Juliet may be added to the list, already numerous, of plays in which our great poet has had a dramatic precursor, and that some slight remains of the old play are still to be traced in the earliest quarto.’

‘ The story has at all times been eminently popular in all parts of Europe. A Spanish play was formed on it by Lope de Vega, entitled *Los Castelvies y Monteses*; and another in the same language, by Don Francisco de Roxas, under the name of *Los Vandos de Verona*. In Italy, as may well be supposed, it has not been neglected. The modern productions on this subject are too numerous to be specified; but as early as 1578 Luigi Groto produced a drama upon the subject, called *Hadriana*, of which an analysis may be found in Mr. Walker’s *Memoir on Italian Tragedy*. Groto has stated in his prologue that the story is drawn from the ancient history of Adria, his native place;’ so that Verona is not the only place that has appropriated this interesting fable.

This has been generally considered one of Shakspeare’s earliest plays*; and Schlegel has eloquently said, that ‘ it shines with the colours of the dawn of morning, but a dawn whose purple clouds already announce the thunder of a sultry day.’ ‘ Romeo and Juliet (says the same admirable critic) is a picture of love and its pitiable fate, in a world whose atmosphere is too rough for this tenderest blossom of human life. Two beings, created for each other, feel mutual love at first glance; every consideration disappears before the irresistible influence of living in one another; they join themselves secretly, under circumstances hostile in the highest degree to their union, relying merely on the protection of an invisible power. By unfriendly events following blow upon blow, their heroic constancy is exposed to all manner of trials, till forcibly separated from each other, by a voluntary death they are united in the grave to meet again in another world. All this is to be found in the beautiful story which Shakspeare has not invented, and which, however

* Malone thinks that the foundation of the play might be laid in 1591, and finished in 1596. Mr. George Chalmers places the date of its composition in the spring of 1592. And Dr. Drake, with greater probability, ascribes it to 1593. There are four early quarto editions in 1597, 1599, 1609, and one without a date. The first edition is less ample than those which succeed. Shakspeare appears to have revised the play; but in the succeeding impressions no fresh incidents are introduced, the alterations are merely additions to the length of particular speeches and scenes. The principal variations are pointed out in the notes.

simply told, will always excite a tender sympathy: but it was reserved for Shakspeare to unite purity of heart and the glow of imagination, sweetness and dignity of manners and passionate violence, in one ideal picture. By the manner in which he has handled it, it has become a glorious song of praise on that inexpressible feeling which endobles the soul, and gives to it its highest sublimity, and which elevates even the senses themselves into soul, and at the same time is a melancholy elegy on its frailty from its own nature and external circumstances; at once the deification and the burial of love. It appears here like a heavenly spark that, descending to the earth, is converted into a flash of lightning, by which mortal creatures are almost in the same moment set on fire and consumed. Whatever is most intoxicating in the odour of a southern spring, languishing in the song of the nightingale, or voluptuous in the first opening of the rose, is to be found in this poem. But even more rapidly than the earliest blossoms of youth and beauty decay, it hurries on from the first timidly-bold declaration of love and modest return, to the most unlimited passion, to an irrevocable union; then, amidst alternating storms of rapture and despair, to the death of the two lovers, who still appear enviable as their love survives them, and as by their death they have obtained a triumph over every separating power. The sweetest and the bitterest, love and hatred, festivity and dark forebodings, tender embraces and sepulchres, the fulness of life and self-annihilation, are all here brought close to each other; and all these contrasts are so blended in the harmonious and wonderful work into a unity of impression, that the echo which the whole leaves behind in the mind resembles a single but endless sigh.

‘The excellent dramatic arrangement, the signification of each character in its place, the judicious selection of all the circumstances even the most minute,’ have been pointed out by Schlegel in a dissertation referred to in a note at the end of the play; in which he remarks, that ‘there can be nothing more diffuse, more wearisome, than the rhyming history, which Shakspeare’s genius, “like richest alchymy,” has changed to beauty and to worthiness.’ Nothing but the delight of seeing into this wonderful metamorphosis can compensate for the laborious task of reading through more than three thousand six and seven-footed iambics, which, in respect of every thing that amuses, affects and enraptures us in this play, are as a mere blank leaf.—He all interest is entirely smothered under the coarse, heavy tensions of an elaborate exposition. How much was to be cleared away, before life could be breathed into the shapeless mass! many parts what is here given bears the same relation to what Shakspeare has made out of it, which any common descrip-

of a thing bears to the thing itself. Thus out of the following hint—

‘ A courtier, that eche-where was highly had in pryce,
For he was courteous of his speche and pleasant of devise :
Even as a lyon would emong the lambes be bolde,
Such was emonge the bashfull maydes Mercutio to beholde ;’

and the addition that the said Mercutio had from his swathing-bands constantly had cold hands,—has arisen a splendid character decked out with the utmost profusion of wit. Not to mention a number of nicer deviations, we find also some important incidents from the invention; for instance, the meeting and the combat between Paris and Romeo at Juliet’s grave.—Shakspeare knew how to transform by enchantment letters into spirit, a workman’s daub into a poetical masterpiece.

‘ Lessing declared Romeo and Juliet to be the only tragedy, that he knew, which love himself had assisted to compose. I know not (says Schlegel) how to end more gracefully than with these simple words, wherein so much lies :—One may call this poem an harmonious miracle, whose component parts that heavenly power alone could so melt together. It is at the same time enchantingly sweet and sorrowful, pure and glowing, gentle and impetuous, full of elegiac softness, and tragically overpowering.’

PROLOGUE. \

Two households, both alike in dignity,

In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge, break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes

A pair of star-cross’d lovers take their life;
Whose misadventur’d piteous overthrows
Do, with their death, bury their parents’ strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark’d love,
And the continuance of their parents’ rage,
Which, but their children’s end, nought could remove,

Is now the two hours’ traffick of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

ESCALUS, Prince of Verona.

PARIS, *a young Nobleman, Kinsman to the Prince.*

MONTAGUE, } *Heads of Two Houses at variance with each*
CAPULET, } *other.*

An old Man, Uncle to Capulet.

ROMEO, *Son to Montague.*

MERCUTIO, *Kinsman to the Prince, and Friend to Romeo.*

BENVOLIO, *Nephew to Montague, and Friend to Romeo.*

TYBALT, *Nephew to Lady Capulet.*

FRIAR LAWRENCE, *a Franciscan.*

FRIAR JOHN, *of the same Order.*

BALTHAZAR, *Servant to Romeo.*

SAMPSON, } *Servants to Capulet.*
GREGORY, }

ABRAM, *Servant to Montague.*

An Apothecary.

Three Musicians.

Chorus. Boy, Page to Paris. PETER. *An Officer.*

LADY MONTAGUE, *Wife to Montague.*

LADY CAPULET, *Wife to Capulet.*

JULIET, *Daughter to Capulet.*

Nurse to Juliet.

Citizens of Verona; several Men and Women, Relations to both Houses; Maskers, Guards, Watchmen, and Attendants.

SCENE, *during the greater Part of the Play, in Verona:
once in the Fifth Act, at Mantua.*

ROMEO AND JULIET.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A public Place.*

*Enter SAMPSON and GREGORY, armed with
Swords and Bucklers.*

Sampson.

GREGORY, o' my word, we'll not carry coals¹.

Gre. No, for then we should be colliers.

Sam. I mean, an we be in choler, we'll draw.

Gre. Ay, while you live, draw your neck out of the collar.

Sam. I strike quickly, being moved.

Gre. But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

Sam. A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

¹ To *carry coals* is to put up with insults, to submit to any degradation. Anciently, in great families, the scullions, turnspits, and carriers of wood and coals were esteemed the very lowest of menials, the drudges of all the rest. Such attendants upon the royal household, in progresses, were called the *black-guard*; and hence the origin of that term. Thus in *May Day*, a Comedy by Geo. Chapman, 1608:—'You must swear by no man's beard but your own; for that may breed a quarrel: above all things, you must *carry no coals*.' Again, in the same play:—'Now my ancient being of an un-coal-carrying spirit,' &c. And in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*:—'Here comes one that will *carry coals*; ergo will hold my dog.' Again in *King Henry V.* Act iii. Sc. 2:—'At Calais they stole a fireshovel; I knew by that piece of service the men would *carry coals*.'

Gre. To move, is—to stir; and to be valiant, is—to stand to it: therefore, if thou art mov'd, thou run'st away.

Sam. A dog of that house shall move me to stand: I will take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's.

Gre. That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes to the wall.

Sam. True; and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, are ever thrust to the wall:—therefore I will push Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids to the wall.

Gre. The quarrel is between our masters, and us their men.

Sam. 'Tis all one, I will show myself a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be cruel with the maids; I will cut off their heads.

Gre. The heads of the maids?

Sam. Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads; take it in what sense thou wilt.

Gre. They must take it in sense, that feel it.

Sam. Me they shall feel, while I am able to stand: and, 'tis known, I am a pretty piece of flesh.

Gre. 'Tis well, thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been poor John². Draw thy tool; here comes two of the house of the Montagues³.

² *Poor John* is *hake*, dried and salted.

³ The disregard of concord is in character. It should be observed that the partisans of the Montague family wore a token in their hats in order to distinguish them from their enemies the Capulets. Hence throughout this play they are known at a distance. Gascoigne adverts to this circumstance in a Masque written for Viscount Montacute, in 1575:—

' And for a further prooffe, he shewed in hys hat
Thys token, which the *Montacutes* did beare always, for that
They covet to be knowne from *Capels*, where they pass
For ancient grutch whych long ago 'twene these two houses
was '

Enter ABRAM *and* BALTHASAR.

Sam. My naked weapon is out; quarrel, I will back thee.

Gre. How? turn thy back, and run?

Sam. Fear me not.

Gre. No, marry: I fear thee!

Sam. Let us take the law of our sides; let them begin.

Gre. I will frown, as I pass by; and let them take it as they list.

Sam. Nay, as they dare: I will bite my thumb⁴ at them; which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.

Abr. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Sam. I do bite my thumb, sir.

Abr. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Sam. Is the law on our side, if I say—ay?

Gre. No.

Sam. No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir; but I bite my thumb, sir.

Gre. Do you quarrel, sir?

⁴ This mode of insult, in order to begin a quarrel, seems to have been common in Shakspeare's time. Decker, in his *Dead Term*, 1608, describing the various groups that daily frequented St. Paul's Church, says, 'What swearing is there, what shoudering, what justling, what jeering, what *byting of thumbs*, to beget quarrels!' And Lodge, in his *Wits Miserie*, 1596:—'Behold, next I see Contempt marching forth, giving me the *fico with his thumbe in his mouthe*.' 'The mode in which this contemptuous action was performed is thus described by Cotgrave, in a passage which has escaped the industry of all the commentators:—'Faire la nique: to mocke by nodding or lifting up of the chinne; or more properly, to threaten or defie, by putting the thumbe naile into the mouth, and with a jerke (from the upper teeth) make it to knacke.' So in Randolph's *Muses' Looking Glass*:—

'———— Dogs and pistols!

To bite his thumb at me!

Wear I a sword

To see men bite their thumbs?"

Abr. Quarrel, sir? no, sir.

Sam. If you do, sir, I am for you: I serve as good a man as you.

Abr. No better.

Sam. Well, sir.

Enter BENVOLIO, at a distance.

Gre. Say—better; here comes one of my master's kinsmen⁵.

Sam. Yes, better, sir.

Abr. You lie.

Sam. Draw, if you be men.—Gregory, remember thy swashing⁶ blow. [*They fight.*

Ben. Part, fools; put up your swords; you know not what you do. [*Beats down their Swords.*

Enter TYBALT.

Tyb. What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?

Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

Ben. I do but keep the peace; put up thy sword, Or manage it to part these men with me.

Tyb. What, drawn, and talk of peace? I hate the word,
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee:
Have at thee, coward. [*They fight.*

Enter several Partisans of both Houses, who join the Fray; then enter Citizens, with Clubs.

1 *Cit.* Clubs⁷, bills, and partizans! strike! beat them down!

Down with the Capulets! down with the Montagues!

⁵ Gregory is a servant of the Capulets: he must therefore mean Tybalt, who enters immediately after Benvolio.

⁶ i. e. *swaggering* or *dashing*.

⁷ See vol. iii. p. 201, note 4.

Enter CAPULET, *in his Gown*; and LADY CAPULET.

Cap. What noise is this?—Give me my long sword⁸, ho!

La. Cap. A crutch, a crutch!—Why call you for a sword?

Cap. My sword, I say!—Old Montague is come, And flourishes his blade in spite of me.

Enter MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE.

Mon. Thou villain Capulet,—Hold me not, let me go.

La. Mon. Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.

Enter Prince, *with Attendants.*

Prin. Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
Profaners of this neighbour-stained steel,—
Will they not hear!—what ho! you men, you
beasts,—

That quench the fire of your pernicious rage
With purple fountains issuing from your veins,
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands
Throw your mistemper'd⁹ weapons to the ground,
And hear the sentence of your moved prince.—
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
By thee, old Capulet and Montague,
Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets;
And made Verona's ancient citizens
Cast by their grave beseeming ornaments,
To wield old partisans, in hands as old,
Canker'd with peace, to part your canker'd hate:

⁸ See vol. i. p. 214, note 14. The *long sword* was the weapon used in active warfare; a lighter, shorter, and less desperate weapon was worn for ornament, to which we have other allusions.

‘ ——— No sword worn, but one to dance with.’

⁹ i. e. *angry* weapons. So in *King John*:—

‘ This inundation of *mistemper'd* humour,’ &c.

If ever you disturb our streets again,
 Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
 For this time, all the rest depart away :
 You, Capulet, shall go along with me ;
 And, Montague, come you this afternoon,
 To know our further pleasure in this case,
 To old Free-town¹⁰, our common judgment-place.
 Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

[*Exeunt Prince, and Attendants ; CAPULET,
 'LA. CAP. TYBALT, Citizens, and Servants.*

Mon. Who set this ancient quarrel new abroad ?—
 Speak, nephew, were you by, when it began ?

Ben. Here were the servants of your adversary,
 And yours, close fighting ere I did approach :
 I drew to part them ; in the instant came
 The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepar'd ;
 Which, as he breath'd defiance to my ears,
 He swung about his head, and cut the winds,
 Who, nothing hurt withal, hiss'd him in scorn :
 While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,
 Came more and more, and fought on part and part,
 Till the prince came, who parted either part.

La. Mon. O, where is Romeo !—saw you him
 to-day ?

Right glad I am, he was not at this fray.

Ben. Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun
 Peer'd forth the golden window of the east¹¹,

¹⁰ The poet found the name of this place in Brooke's Tragicall History of Romeus and Juliet, 1562. It is there said to be the castle of the Capulets.

¹¹ The same thought occurs in Spenser's Faerie Queene, b. ii. c. 10 :—

'Early before the morn with cremosin ray
 The windows of bright heaven opened had,
 Through which into the world the dawning day
 Might looke,' &c.

Again in Summa Totalis, or All in All, 4to. 1607 :—

'Now heaven's bright eye (awake by Vesper's shrine)
 Peepes through the purple windowes of the East.'

A troubled mind drave me to walk abroad;
Where,—underneath the grove of sycamore,
That westward rooteth from the city's side,—
So early walking did I see your son:
Towards him I made; but he was 'ware of me,
And stole into the covert of the wood:
I, measuring his affections by my own,—
That most are busied when they are most alone,—
Pursu'd my humour, not pursuing his,
And gladly shunn'd who gladly fled from me.

Mon. Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs:
But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
Should in the furthest east begin to draw
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,
Away from light steals home my heavy son,
And private in his chamber pens himself;
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out,
And makes himself an artificial night:
Black and portentous must this humour prove,
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

Ben. My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

Mon. I neither know it, nor can learn of him.

Ben. Have you importun'd him by any means?

Mon. Both by myself, and many other friends:
But he, his own affections' counsellor,
Is to himself—I will not say, how true—
But to himself so secret and so close,
So far from sounding and discovery,
As is the bud bit with an envious worm,
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
Or dedicate his beauty to the sun¹².

¹² The old copy reads:—

‘Or dedicate his beauty to the *same*.’

The emendation is by Theobald: who states, with great plausibility, that *sunne* might easily be mistaken for *same*. Malone

Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow,
We would as willingly give cure, as know.

Enter ROMEO, at a distance.

Ben. See, where he comes : So please you, step
aside ;

I'll know his grievance, or be much denied.

Mon. I would, thou wert so happy by thy stay,
To hear true shrift.—Come, madam, let's away.

[Exeunt MONTAGUE and Lady.]

Ben. Good morrow, cousin.

Rom. Is the day so young ?

Ben. But new struck nine.

Rom. Ah me ! sad hours seem long.
Was that my father that went hence so fast ?

Ben. It was :—What sadness lengthens Romeo's
hours ?

Rom. Not having that, which having makes them
short.

Ben. In love ?

Rom. Out—

Ben. Of love ?

Rom. Out of her favour, where I am in love.

Ben. Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof !

Rom. Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,
Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will ¹³ !

observes, that Shakspeare has evidently imitated the Rosamond of Daniel in the last act of this play, and in this passage may have remembered the following lines in one of the Sonnets of the same writer, who was then extremely popular :—

‘ And whilst thou *spread'st* into the rising *sunne*
The fairest *flower* that ever saw the light,
Now joy thy time before thy sweet be done.’

These lines add great support to Theobald's emendation. There are few passages in the poet where so great an improvement of language is obtained by so slight a deviation from the text of the old copy.

¹³ i. e. should *blindly* and recklessly think he can surmount all obstacles to his will.

Where shall we dine?—O me!—What fray was here?
 Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.
 Here's much to do with hate, but more with love:—
 Why then, O brawling love! O loving hate¹⁴!
 O any thing, of nothing first create!
 O heavy lightness! serious vanity!
 Misshapen chaos of well seeming forms!
 Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!
 Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!—
 This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
 Dost thou not laugh?

Ben. No, coz, I rather weep.

Rom. Good heart, at what?

Ben. At thy good heart's oppression.

Rom. Why, such is love's transgression.—
 Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast;
 Which thou wilt propagate, to have it prest
 With more of thine: this love, that thou hast shown,
 Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.

¹⁴ Every ancient sonneteer characterised Love by contraries. Watson begins one of his canzonets:—

'Love is a sowre delight, and sugred grieve,

A living death, and ever-dying life,' &c.

Turberville makes Reason harangue against it in the same manner:—

'A fierie frost, a flame that frozen is with ise!

A heavie burden light to beare! A vertue fraught with
 vice!' &c.

Immediately taken from the Romaunt of the Rose:—

'Love it is an hateful pees,

A free aquitaunce without relees,—

An heavie burthen light to beare,' &c.

This kind of antithesis was very much in the taste of the Provençal and Italian poets. Perhaps it might be hinted by the Ode of Sappho, preserved by Longinus: Petrarch is full of it:—

'Pace non trovo, e non ho da far guerra;

E temo, e spero, e ardo, e son un ghiaccio;

E volo sopra'l ciel, e ghiaccio in terra;

E nulla stringo, e tutto'l mondo abbraccio,' &c.

This sonnet is translated by Sir Thomas Wyatt, under the title of
 'Description of the Contrarious Passions in a Lover.'—*Farmer.*

Love is a smoke rais'd with the fume of sighs;
 Being urg'd¹⁵, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
 Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:
 What is it else? a madness most discreet,
 A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.
 Farewell, my coz. [Going:

Ben. Soft, I will go along;
 An if you leave me so, you do me wrong.

Rom. Tut, I have lost myself; I am not here;
 This is not Romeo, he's some other where.

Ben. Tell me in sadness¹⁶, whom she is you love.

Rom. What, shall I groan, and tell thee?

Ben. Groan? why, no;
 But sadly tell me who.

Rom. Bid a sick man in sadness make his will:—
 Ah, word ill urg'd to one that is so ill!
 In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

Ben. I aim'd so near, when I suppos'd you lov'd.

Rom. A right good marksman!—And she's fair
 I love.

Ben. A right fair mark, fair coz, is soonest hit.

Rom. Well, in that hit, you miss: she'll not be hit
 With Cupid's arrow, she hath Dian's wit;
 And, in strong proof of chastity well arm'd¹⁷,
 From love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd.

¹⁵ The old copy reads, 'Being *purg'd* a fire,' &c. The emendation I have admitted into the text was suggested by Dr. Johnson. To *urge* the fire is to *kindle* or *excite* it. So in Chapman's version of the twenty-first Iliad:—

'And as a cauldron, under put with store of fire,
 Bavins of sere-wood *urging* it,' &c.

So Akenside in his Hymn to Cheerfulness:—

'Haste, light the tapers, *urge the fire*,
 And bid the joyless day retire.'

¹⁶ i. e. tell me *gravely*, in *seriousness*.

¹⁷ 'As this play was written in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, these speeches of Romeo may be regarded as an oblique compliment to her majesty, who was not liable to be displeased at hearing her chastity praised after she was suspected to have lost

She will not stay the siege of loving terms,
 Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes,
 Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold:
 O, she is rich in beauty; only poor,
 That, when she dies, with beauty dies her store¹⁸.

Ben. Then she hath sworn, that she will still live
 chaste?

Rom. She hath, and in that sparing makes huge
 waste;

For beauty, starv'd with her severity,
 Cuts beauty off from all posterity.
 She is too fair, too wise; wisely too fair,
 To merit bliss by making me despair:
 She hath forsworn to love; and, in that vow,
 Do I live dead, that live to tell it now.

Ben. Be rul'd by me, forget to think of her.

Rom. O, teach me how I should forget to think.

Ben. By giving liberty unto thine eyes;
 Examine other beauties.

Rom. 'Tis the way
 To call hers, exquisite, in question more¹⁹:
 These happy masks²⁰, that kiss fair ladies' brows,

it, or her beauty commended in the sixty-seventh year of her age, though she never possessed any when young. Her declaration that she would continue unmarried increases the probability of the present supposition.'—*Steevens*.

¹⁸ The meaning appears to be, as Mason gives it, 'She is poor only, because she leaves no part of her store behind her, as with her all beauty will die:—

'For beauty starved with her severity
 Cuts beauty off from all posterity.'

¹⁹ i. e. to call her exquisite beauty more into my mind, and make it more the subject of conversation. *Question* is used frequently with this sense by Shakspeare.

²⁰ This is probably an allusion to the *masks* worn by the female spectators of the play; unless we suppose that *these* means no more than *the*. See vol. ii. p. 44, note 12:—

' ————— *these black masks*

Proclaim an enshield beauty ten times louder
 Than beauty could displayed.'

Being black, put us in mind they hide the fair;
 He, that is stricken blind, cannot forget
 The precious treasure of his eyesight lost;
 Show me a mistress that is passing fair,
 What doth her beauty serve, but as a note
 Where I may read, who pass'd that passing fair?
 Farewell; thou canst not teach me to forget.

Ben. I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A Street.*

Enter CAPULET, PARIS, and Servant.

Cap. And Montague is bound as well as I,
 In penalty alike; and 'tis not hard, I think,
 For men so old as we to keep the peace.

Par. Of honourable reckoning are you both;
 And pity 'tis, you liv'd at odds so long.
 But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?

Cap. By saying o'er what I have said before:
 My child is yet a stranger in the world,
 She hath not seen the change of fourteen years;
 Let two more summers wither in their pride,
 Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.

Par. Younger than she are happy mothers made.

Cap. And too soon marr'd are those so early
 made¹.

The earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she,

¹ The quarto of 1597 reads:—

'And too soon *marr'd* are those so early *married*.'

Puttenham, in his *Arte of Poesy*, 1589, uses this expression, which seems to be proverbial, as an instance of a figure which he calls the *Rebound*:—

'The maid that soon *married* is, soon *marred* is.'

The jingle between *marr'd* and *made* is likewise frequent among the old writers. So Sidney:—

'Oh! he is *marr'd*, that is for others *made*!'

Spenser introduces it very often in his different poems.

She is the hopeful lady of my earth²:
 But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
 My will to her consent is but a part³;
 An she agree, within her scope of choice
 Lies my consent and fair according voice.
 This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,
 Whereto I have invited many a guest,
 Such as I love; and you, among the store,
 One more, most welcome, makes my number more.
 At my poor house, look to behold this night
 Earth-treading stars, that make dark' heaven light:
 Such comfort, as do lusty young men⁴ feel

² *Fille de terre* is the old French phrase for an heiress. *Earth* is likewise put for *lands*, i. e. *landed estate*, in other old plays. But Mason suggests that *earth* may here mean corporal part, as in a future passage of this play:—

'Can I go forward when my heart is here?

Turn back, dull *earth*, and find thy centre out.'

So in Shakspeare's 146th Sonnet:—

'Poor soul, the centre of my sinful *earth*.'

³ i. e. in comparison to. See vol. iv. p. 272, note 9.

⁴ For '*lusty young men*' Johnson would read '*lusty yeomen*.' Ritson has clearly shown that *young men* was used for *yeomen* in our elder language. And the reader may convince himself by turning to Spelman's Glossary in the words *juniores* and *yeoman*. Cotgrave also translates '*Franc-gontier, a good rich yeoman; substantial yonker*.' He also renders '*Vergaland, a lustie yonker*.' As in another part of this play, '*young trees*' and '*young tree*,' is printed in the old copy for '*yew trees*' and *yew tree*,' this may be also a misprint for *yeomen*. 'You shall feel from the sight and conversation of these ladies such comfort as the farmer receives at the coming of spring;' which is (as Baret says) '*the lustiest and most busie time to husbandemen*.'

Steevens supports the present reading:—'To tell Paris (says he) that he should feel the same sort of pleasure in an assembly of beauties which *young folk* feel in that season when they are most gay and amorous, was surely as much as the old man ought to say.

'—— ubi subdita flamma medullis,

Vere magis (quia vere calor redit ossibus).'

Virgil. Georg. iii.

Malone adds, from Shakspeare's 99th Sonnet:—

'When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,
 Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing.'

When well apparell'd April on the heel
 Of limping winter treads, even such delight
 Among fresh female buds shall you this night
 Inherit⁵ at my house; hear all, all see,
 And like her most, whose merit most shall be:
 Which, on more view of many, mine being one⁶,
 May stand in number, though in reckoning none.
 Come, go with me;—Go, sirrah, trudge about
 Through fair Verona; find those persons out,
 Whose names are written there [*gives a Paper*], and
 to them say,
 My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

[*Exeunt* CAPULET and PARIS.

Serv. Find them out, whose names are written here⁷? It is written—that the shoemaker should meddle with his yard,—and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his pencil, and the painter with his

⁵ To *inherit*, in the language of Shakspeare, is to *possess*.

⁶ By a perverse adherence to the first quarto copy of 1597, which reads, '*Such amongst* view of many,' &c. this passage has been made unintelligible. The subsequent quartos and the folio read, '*Which one [on] more,*' &c.; evidently meaning, '*Hear all, see all, and like her most who has the most merit; her, which, after regarding attentively the many, my daughter being one, may stand unique in merit, though she may be reckoned nothing, or held in no estimation. The allusion, as Malone has shown, is to the old proverbial expression, 'One is no number,' thus adverted to in Decker's Honest Whore:—*

' ——— to fall to one
 ——— is to fall to none,
 For one no number is.'

And in Shakspeare's 136th Sonnet:—

' Among a number one is reckon'd none,
 Then in the number let me pass untold.'

It will be unnecessary to inform the reader that *which* is here used for *who*, a substitution frequent in Shakspeare, as in all the writers of his time. One of the later quartos has corrected the error of the others, and reads, as in the present text:—

' Which on more view,' &c.

⁷ The quarto of 1597 adds, '*And yet I know not who are written here: I must to the learned to learn of them: that's as much as to say, the tailor,*' &c.

nets; but I am sent to find those persons, whose names are here writ, and can never find what names the writing person hath here writ. I must to the learned:—In good time.

Enter BENVOLIO and ROMEO.

Ben. Tut, man! one fire burns out another's burning.

One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish;
Turn giddy, and be help by backward turning;
One desperate grief cures with another's languish:
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die.

Rom. Your plantain leaf is excellent for that⁸.

Ben. For what, I pray thee?

Rom. For your broken shin.

Ben. Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

Rom. Not mad, but bound more than a madman is:
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,
Whipp'd, and tormented, and—Good-e'en, good fellow.

Serv. God gi' good e'en.—I pray, sir, can you read?

Rom. Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

Serv. Perhaps you have learn'd it without book:
But, I pray, can you read any thing you see?

Rom. Ay, if I know the letters, and the language.

Serv. Ye say honestly; Rest you merry!

Rom. Stay, fellow; I can read. [*Reads.*

*Signior Martino, and his wife and daughters;
County Anselme, and his beauteous sisters; The
lady widow of Vitruvio; Signior Placentio, and his*

⁸ The *plantain leaf* is a blood-stancher, and was formerly applied to green wounds. So in *Albumazar*:—

' Help, Armellina, help! I'm fallen i'the cellar:
Bring a fresh *plantain-leaf*, I've broke my shin.'

lovely nieces; Mercutio, and his brother Valentine; Mine uncle Capulet, his wife, and daughters; My fair niece Rosaline; Livia; Signior Valentio, and his cousin Tybalt; Lucio, and the lively Helena.

A fair assembly; [*Gives back the Note*]. Whither should they come?

Serv. Up.

Rom. Whither?

Serv. To supper; to our house.

Rom. Whose house?

Serv. My master's.

Rom. Indeed, I should have asked you that before.

Serv. Now I'll tell you without asking: My master is the great rich Capulet; and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray, come and crush a cup of wine⁹. Rest you merry. [*Exit.*]

Ben. At this same ancient feast of Capulet's
Supps the fair Rosaline, whom thou so lov'st;
With all the admired beauties of Verona.
Go thither; and, with unattainted eye,
Compare her face with some that I shall show,
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

Rom. When the devout religion of mine eye
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires!
And these,—who, often drown'd, could never die,—
Transparent hereticks, be burnt for liars!
One fairer than my love! the all-seeing sun
Ne'er saw her match, since first the world begun.

Ben. Tut! you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself pois'd with herself in either eye:
But in those crystal scales, let there be weigh'd
Your lady's love¹⁰ against some other maid

⁹ This cant expression seems to have been once common: it often occurs in old plays. We have one still in use of similar import:—*To crack a bottle.*

¹⁰ Heath says, '*Your lady's love*' is the love you bear to your lady, which, in our language, is commonly used for the lady herself.' Perhaps we should read, '*Your lady love.*'

That I will show you, shining at this feast,
And she shall scant show well, that now shows best.

Rom. I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,
But to rejoice in splendour of mine own. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A Room in Capulet's House*¹.

Enter LADY CAPULET and Nurse.

La. Cap. Nurse, where's my daughter? call her
forth to me.

Nurse. Now, by my maidenhead,—at twelve year
old,—

I bade her come.—What, lamb! what, lady-bird!—
God forbid!—where's this girl?—what, Juliet!

Enter JULIET.

Jul. How now, who calls?

Nurse. Your mother.

Jul. Madam, I am here,
What is your will?

La. Cap. This is the matter:—Nurse, give leave
awhile,

We must talk in secret.—Nurse, come back again;
I have remember'd me, thou shalt hear our counsel.
Thou know'st my daughter's of a pretty age.

Nurse. 'Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

La. Cap. She's not fourteen.

Nurse. I'll lay fourteen of my teeth,
And yet, to my teen² be it spoken, I have but four,—
She is not fourteen: How long is it now
To Lammas-tide?

¹ In all the old copies the greater part of this scene was printed as prose. Capell was the first who exhibited it as verse; the subsequent editors have followed him, but perhaps erroneously.

² i. e. to my sorrow. This old word is introduced for the sake of the jingle between *teen*, and *four*, and *fourteen*.

La. Cap. A fortnight, and odd days.

Nurse. Even or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammas-eve at night, shall she be fourteen.
Susan and she,—God rest all Christian souls!—
Were of an age.—Well, Susan is with God;
She was too good for me: But, as I said,
On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen;
That shall she, marry; I remember it well.
'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years³;
And she was wean'd,—I never shall forget it,—
Of all the days of the year, upon that day;
For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,
Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall,
My lord and you were then at Mantua:—
Nay, I do bear a brain⁴:—but, as I said,
When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple
Of my dug, and felt it bitter, pretty fool!
To see it tetchy, and fall out with the dug.
Shake, quoth the dove-house: 'twas no need, I trow,
To bid me trudge.

And since that time it is eleven years:
For then she could stand alone; nay, by the rood,
She could have run and waddled all about.
For even the day before, she broke her brow:
And then my husband—God be with his soul!
'A was a merry man;—took up the child:
Yea, quoth he, dost thou fall upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward, when thou hast more wit;

³ Mr. Tyrwhitt thinks that Shakspeare had in view the earthquake which had been felt in England in his own time, on the 6th of April, 1580; and that we may from hence conjecture that *Romeo and Juliet* was written in 1591.

⁴ The nurse means to boast of her retentive faculty. To *bear a brain* was to possess much mental capacity either of attention, ingenuity, or remembrance. Thus in Marston's *Dutch Courtezan*:—

'My silly husband, alas! knows nothing of it, 'tis
I that must *bears a braine* for all.'

Wilt thou not, Jule? and, by my holy-dam,
 The pretty wretch left crying, and said—*Ay*:
 To see now, how a jest shall come about!
 I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,
 I never should forget it; *Wilt thou not, Jule?*
 quoth he:

And, pretty fool, it stinted⁵, and said—*Ay*.

La. Cap. Enough of this; I pray thee, hold thy peace.

Nurse. Yes, madam; Yet I cannot choose but⁶ laugh,

To think it should leave crying, and say—*Ay*:

And yet, I warrant, it had upon its brow

A bump as big as a young cockrel's stone;

A parlous knock; and it cried bitterly.

Yea, quoth my husband, *fall'st upon thy face?*

Thou wilt fall backward, when thou com'st to age;

Wilt thou not, Jule? it stinted, and said—*Ay*.

Jul. And stint thou too, I pray thee, nurse, say I.

Nurse. Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace!

Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nurs'd:

An I might live to see thee married once,

I have my wish.

La. Cap. Marry, that marry is the very theme

I came to talk of:—Tell me, daughter Juliet,

How stands your disposition to be married?

Jul. It is an honour that I dream not of.

⁵ To *stint* is to *stop*. Baret translates 'Lachrymas suppressere, to *stinte* weeping;' and 'to *stinte* talke,' by 'sermones restringere.' So Ben Jonson in *Cynthia's Revels*:—

'—— *Stint* thy babbling tongue,
 Fond Echo.'

Again, in *What You Will*, by Marston:—

'Pish! for shame, *stint* thy idle chat.'

Spenser uses the word frequently.

⁶ This tautologous speech is not in the first quarto of 1597.

Nurse. An honour! were not I thine only nurse,
I'd say, thou hadst suck'd wisdom from thy teat.

La. Cap. Well, think of marriage now; younger
than you,

Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,
Are made already mothers: by my count,
I was your mother much upon these years
That you are now a maid. Thus then, in brief;—
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

Nurse. A man, young lady! lady, such a man,
As all the world—Why, he's a man of wax⁷.

La. Cap. Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

Nurse. Nay, he's a flower; in faith, a very flower⁸.

La. Cap. What say you? can you love the gen-
tleman?

This night you shall behold him at our feast;
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
Examine every married⁹ lineament,
And see how one another lends content;

⁷ i. e. as well made as if he had been modelled in wax. So in *Wily Beguiled*:—'Why, he is a man as one should picture him in wax.' So Horace uses '*Cereæ brachia*,' *waxen arms*, for arms well shaped.—*Od.* xiii. l. 1. Which Dacier explains:—'*Des bras faits au tour comme nous disons d'un bras rond, qu'il est comme de cire.*'

⁸ After this speech of the Nurse, Lady Capulet, in the old quarto, says only:—

'Well, Juliet, how like you of Paris' love?'

She answers, 'I'll look to like,' &c; and so concludes the scene, without the intervention of that stuff to be found in the later quartos and the folio.

⁹ Thus the quarto of 1599. The quarto of 1609 and the folio read, '*several lineaments.*' We have, 'The unity and *married* calm of states,' in *Troilus and Cressida*. And in his eighth Sonnet:—

'If the true concord of well-tuned sounds,
By unions *married*, do offend thine ear.

See vol. vii. p. 338, note 13.

And what obscur'd in this fair volume lies,
 Find written in the margin of his eyes.¹⁰
 This precious book of love, this unbound lover,
 To beautify him, only lacks a cover:
 The fish lives in the sea¹¹; and 'tis much pride,
 For fair without the fair within to hide:
 That book in many's eyes doth share the glory,
 That in gold clasps locks in the golden story;
 So shall you share all that he doth possess,
 By having him, making yourself no less.

Nurse. No less? nay, bigger; women grow by men.

La. Cap. Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

Jul. I'll look to like, if looking liking move:
 But no more deep will I endart¹² mine eye,
 Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, the guests are come, supper served up, you called, my young lady asked for, the nurse cursed in the pantry, and every thing in extremity. I must hence to wait; I beseech you, follow straight.

¹⁰ The comments on ancient books were generally printed in the margin. Horatio says, in *Hamlet*, 'I knew you must be edified by the *margent*,' &c. So in *The Rape of Lucrece*:—

'But she that never cop'd with stranger eyes
 Could pick no meaning from their parling looks,
 Nor read the subtle shining secrecies
 Writ in the glassy *margent* of such books.'

This speech is full of quibbles. The *unbound* lover is a quibble on the *binding* of a book, and the *binding* in *marriage*; and the word *cover* is a quibble on the law phrase for a married woman, *femme couverte*.

¹¹ Dr. Farmer explains this, 'The fish is not yet caught.' Mason thinks that we should read, 'The fish lives in the *shell*; for the sea cannot be said to be a beautiful cover to a fish, though a *shell* may.' The poet may mean nothing more than that those books are most esteemed by the world where *valuable contents* are embellished by as *valuable binding*.

¹² The quarto of 1597 reads, *engage* mine eye.

La. Cap. We follow thee.—Juliet, the county stays.

Nurse. Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *A Street.*

Enter ROMEO, MERCUTIO¹, BENVOLIO, *with five or six Maskers, Torch-Bearers, and Others.*

Rom. What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse?

Or shall we on without apology?

Ben. The date is out of such prolixity².

¹ Shakspeare appears to have formed this character on the following slight hint:—‘Another gentleman, called Mercutio, which was a courtlike gentleman, very well beloved of all men, and by reason of his pleasant and courteous behaviour was in all companies wel intertained.’—*Painter’s Palace of Pleasure*, tom. ii. p. 221.

He is described in similar terms in Arthur Brooke’s poem; and it is added:—

‘A gift he had, which nature gave him in his swathing band,

That frozen mountain’s ice was never half so cold

As were his hands, though ne’er so near the fire he did them hold.’

Hence the poet makes him little sensible to the passion of love, and ‘a jester at wounds which *he never felt.*’

² In King Henry VIII. where the king introduces himself at the entertainment given by Wolsey, he appears, like Romeo and his companions, in a *mask*, and sends a messenger before with an apology for his intrusion. This was a custom observed by those who came uninvited, with a desire to conceal themselves, for the sake of intrigue, or to enjoy the greater freedom of conversation. Their entry on these occasions was always prefaced by some speech in praise of the beauty of the ladies, or the generosity of the entertainer; and to the *prolixity* of such introductions it is probable Romeo is made to allude. In *Histriomastix*, 1610, a man expresses his wonder that the maskers enter without any compliment:—‘What, come they in so blunt, without device?’ Of this kind of masquerading there is a specimen in *Timon*, where Cupid precedes a troop of ladies with a speech.

We'll have no cupid hood-wink'd with a scarf,
 Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath³,
 Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper⁴;
 Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke
 After the prompter, for our entrance:
 But, let them measure us by what they will,
 We'll measure them a measure, and be gone.

Rom. Give me a torch⁵,—I am not for this ambling;

Being but heavy, I will bear the light.

Mer. Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

Rom. Not I, believe me: you have dancing shoes,
 With nimble soles: I have a soul of lead,
 So stakes me to the ground, I cannot move.

Mer. You are a lover; borrow Cupid's wings,
 And soar with them above a common bound.

Rom. I am too sore enpierced with his shaft,
 To soar with his light feathers; and so bound,
 I cannot bound⁶ a pitch above dull woe:
 Under love's heavy burden do I sink.

Mer. And, to sink in it, should you burden love,
 Too great oppression for a tender thing.

Rom. Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,
 Too rude, too boist'rous; and it pricks like thorn.

³ The Tartarian bows resemble in their form the old Roman or Cupid's bow, such as we see on medals and bas-relief. Shakspeare uses the epithet to distinguish it from the English bow, whose shape is the segment of a circle.

⁴ See *King Lear*, Act iv. Sc. 6, p. 509, note 18.

⁵ A *torch-bearer* was a constant appendage to every troop of maskers. To *hold a torch* was anciently no degrading office. Queen Elizabeth's gentlemen pensioners attended her to Cambridge, and *held torches* while a play was acted before her in the Chapel of King's College on a Sunday evening.

⁶ Let Milton on this occasion keep Shakspeare in countenance. *Par. Lost*, book iv. l. 180:—

' ————— in contempt

At one slight bound high over-leap'd all bound.'

Mer. If love be rough with you, be rough with love;
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.—
Give me a case to put my visage in:

[*Putting on a Mask.*

A visor for a visor!—what care I,
What curious eye doth quote⁷ deformities?
Here are the beetle-brows, shall blush for me.

Ben. Come, knock, and enter: and no sooner in,
But every man betake him to his legs.

Rom. A torch for me: let wantons, light of heart,
Tickle the senseless rushes⁸ with their heels;
For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase,—
I'll be a candle-holder, and look on,—
The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done⁹.

Mer. Tut! dun's the mouse, the constable's own
word:

If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire¹⁰

⁷ To quote is to note, to mark. See *Hamlet*, Act ii. Sc. I, note 10.

⁸ Middleton (the author of *The Witch*) has borrowed this thought in his play of *Blurt Master Constable*, 1602:—

' ——— bid him, whose heart no sorrow feels,

Tickle the rushes with his wanton heels,

I have too much lead at mine.'

It has been before observed that the apartments of our ancestors were strewed with rushes, and so it seems was the ancient stage. 'On the very *rushes* when the Comedy is to dance.'—*Decker's Gull's Hornbook*, 1609. Shakspeare does not stand alone in giving the manners and customs of his own times to all countries and ages. Marlowe, in his *Hero and Leander*, describes Hero as

' ——— fearing on the *rushes* to be flung.'

⁹ To hold the candle is a common proverbial expression for being an idle spectator. Among Ray's proverbial sentences we have, 'A good candle-holder proves a good gamester.' This is the 'grandsire phrase' with which Romeo is proverb'd. There is another old prudential maxim subsequently alluded to, which advises to give over when the game is at the fairest.

¹⁰ 'Tut! dun's the mouse, the constable's own word:

If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire.'

Dun is the mouse is a proverbial saying to us of vague signification, alluding to the colour of the mouse; but frequently

Of this (save reverence) love, wherein thou stick'st
Up to the ears.—Come, we burn day-light¹¹, ho.

Rom. Nay, that's not so.

Mer. I mean, sir, in delay
We waste our lights in vain, like lamps by day.
Take our good meaning; for our judgment sits
Five times in that, ere once in our five wits¹².

Rom. And we mean well, in going to this mask;
But 'tis no wit to go.

Mer. Why, may one ask?

Rom. I dreamt a dream to-night.

Mer. And so did I.

Rom. Well, what was yours?

Mer. That dreamers often lie.

Rom. In bed, asleep, while they do dream things
true.

employed with no other intent than that of quibbling on the word *done*. Why it is attributed to a constable we know not. It occurs in the comedy of Patient Grissel, 1603. So in The Two Merry Milkmaids, 1620:—'Why then, 'tis done, and *dun's* the mouse, and undone all the courtiers.' To draw *dun* out of the mire was a rural pastime, in which *dun* meant a dun horse, supposed to be stuck in the mire, and sometimes represented by one of the persons who played, at others by a log of wood. Mr. Gifford has described the game, at which he remembers often to have played, in a note to Ben Jonson's Masque of Christmas, vol. vii. p. 282:—'A log of wood is brought into the midst of the room; this is *dun* (the cart horse), and a cry is raised that he is stuck in the mire. Two of the company advance, either with or without ropes, to draw him out. After repeated attempts, they find themselves unable to do it, and call for more assistance. The game continues till all the company take part in it, when *dun* is extricated of course; and the merriment arises from the awkward and affected efforts of the rustics to lift the log, and sundry arch contrivances to let the ends of it fall on one another's toes.'

¹¹ This proverbial phrase, which was applied to superfluous actions in general, occurs again in The Merry Wives of Windsor. See vol. i. p. 208.

¹² The quarto of 1597 reads, 'Three times a day;' and right wits instead of five wits.

Mer. O, then, I see, queen Mab hath been with you.
 She is the fairies' midwife¹³; and she comes
 In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
 On the fore-finger of an alderman¹⁴,
 Drawn with a team of little atomies¹⁵.
 Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep:
 Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs;
 The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
 The traces, of the smallest spider's web;
 The collars, of the moonshine's watery beams:
 Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film:
 Her waggoner, a small gray-coated gnat¹⁶,
 Not half so big as a round little worm
 Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid:
 Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
 Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
 Time out of mind the fairies' coach-makers.
 And in this state she gallops night by night
 Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love:
 On courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight:
 O'er lawyer's fingers, who straight dream on fees:

¹³ The *fairies' midwife* does not mean the midwife to the fairies, but that she was the person *among* the fairies whose department it was to deliver the fancies of sleeping men of their dreams, those *children of an idle brain*. When we say the *king's judges*, we do not mean persons who judge the king, but persons appointed by him to judge his subjects.—*Steevens*. Warburton, with some plausibility, reads, 'the *fancy's* midwife.'

¹⁴ The quarto of 1597 has, 'of a *burgomaster*.' The citizens of Shakspeare's time appear to have worn this ornament on the *thumb*. So Glapthorne in his comedy of *Wit in a Constable*:—
 'And an *alderman*, as I may say to you, he has no more wit than the rest o'the bench; and that lies in his *thumb ring*.' Shakspeare compares his fairy to the figure carved on the agate-stone of a thumb ring. See vol. iii. p. 366, note 7; and vol. v. p. 176, note 29.

¹⁵ *Atomies* for *atoms*.

¹⁶ There is a similar fanciful description of Queen Mab's chariot in Drayton's *Nymphidia*, which was written several years after this tragedy.

O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream;
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweet-meats tainted
are¹⁷.

Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose¹⁸,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit¹⁹:
And sometimes comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,
Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep,
Then dreams he of another benefice:
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades²⁰,
Of healths five fathom deep: and then anon
Drums in his ear; at which he starts, and wakes;
And, being thus frighted, swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab,
That plats the manes of horses in the night:
And bakes the elf-locks²¹ in foul sluttish hairs,
Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them, and learns them first to bear,

¹⁷ This probably alludes to the 'kissing comfits' mentioned by Falstaff in the last act of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*.

¹⁸ This speech received much alteration after the first edition in the quarto of 1597: and Shakspeare has inadvertently introduced the *courtier* twice. Mr. Tyrwhitt finding 'countries knees' in the first instance printed in the second folio, would read *counties*' (i. e. noblemen's) knees. Steevens remarks that the whole speech bears a resemblance to a passage of Claudian *In Sextum Consulatum Honorii Augusti Præfatio*.

¹⁹ A place in court.

²⁰ The quarto of 1597 reads, 'counter mines.' Spanish blades were held in high esteem. A sword was called a *Toledo*, from the excellence of the Toletan steel.

²¹ i. e. *fairy locks*, locks of hair clotted and tangled in the night. It was a common superstition; and Warburton conjectures that it had its rise from the horrid disease called *Plica polonica*.

Making them women of good carriage²².

This, this is she—

Rom. Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace;
Thou talk'st of nothing.

Mer. True, I talk of dreams;
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy;
Which is as thin of substance as the air;
And more inconstant than the wind, who woos
Even now the frozen bosom of the north,
And, being anger'd, puffs away from thence,
Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.

Ben. This wind, you talk of, blows us from ourselves;
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

Rom. I fear, too early; for my mind misgives,
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night's revels; and expire²³ the term
Of a despised life, clos'd in my breast,
By some vile forfeit of untimely death:
But He, that hath the steerage of my course,
Direct my sail!—On, lusty gentlemen.

Ben. Strike, drum²⁴. [*Exeunt.*

²² So in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act i. Sc. 2:—

‘—— let them be men of great repute and carriage.

‘*Moth.* Sampson, master; he was a man of good carriage, great carriage; for he carried the town-gates.’

²³ So in *The Rape of Lucrece*:—

‘An *expir'd* date cancell'd ere well begun.’

And in *Mother Hubbard's Tale*:—

‘Now whereas time flying with wings swift
Expired had the term,’ &c.

²⁴ Here the folio adds:—‘*They march about the stage, and serving men come forth with their napkins.*’

SCENE V¹. *A Hall in Capulet's House.*

Musicians waiting. Enter Servants.

1 *Serv.* Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take away? he shift a trencher²! he scrape a trencher!

2 *Serv.* When good manners shall lie all in one or two men's hands, and they unwashed too, 'tis a foul thing.

1 *Serv.* Away with the joint-stools, remove the court-cupboard³, look to the plate:—good thou, save me a piece of marchpane⁴; and, as thou lovest

¹ This scene is not in the first copy in the quarto of 1597.

² To *shift a trencher* was technical. So in *The Miseries of Enforst Marriage*, 1608:—'Learne more manners, stand at your brother's backe, as to *shift a trencher* neatly,' &c. Trenchers were used in Shakspeare's time and long after by persons of good fashion and quality. They continued common till a late period in many public societies, and are now, or were lately, still retained at Lincoln's Inn.

³ The *court cupboard* was the ancient sideboard: it was a cumbrous piece of furniture, with stages or shelves gradually receding, like stairs, to the top, whereon the plate was displayed at festivals. They are mentioned in many of our old comedies. Thus in Chapman's *Monsieur D'Olive*, 1606:—'Here shall stand my *court cupboard*, with its furniture of plate.' Again in his *May Day*, 1611:—'Court cupboards planted with flaggons, cans, cups, beakers,' &c. Two of these ancient pieces of furniture are still in Stationers' Hall: they are used at public festivals to display the antique silver vessels of the Company, consisting of cans, cups, beakers, flaggons, &c. There is a print in a curious work, entitled *Laurea Austriaca*, folio, 1627, representing an entertainment given by King James I. to the Spanish ambassadors, in 1623; from which the reader will get a better notion of the *court cupboard* than volumes of description would afford him. It was sometimes also called a *cupboard of plate*, and a *livery cupboard*.

⁴ *Marchpane* was a constant article in the desserts of our ancestors. It was a sweet cake, composed of filberts, almonds, pistachoes, pine kernels, and sugar of roses, with a small portion of flour. They were often made in fantastic forms. In 1562 the Stationers' Company paid 'for ix marchpaynes xxvi. s. viii. d.'

me, let the porter let in Susan Grindstone, and Nell.—Antony! and Potpan!

2 *Serv.* Ay, boy; ready.

1 *Serv.* You are looked for, and called for, asked for, and sought for, in the great chamber.

2 *Serv.* We cannot be here and there too.—
Cheerly, boys; be brisk a while, and the longer liver take all. *[They retire behind.]*

Enter CAPULET, &c. with the Guests and the Maskers.

Cap. Gentlemen, welcome! ladies, that have their toes

Unplagu'd with corns, will have a bout with you:—

Ah ha, my mistresses! which of you all

Will now deny to dance? she that makes dainty, she,

I'll swear, hath corns; Am I come near you now?

You are welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day,

That I have worn a visor; and could tell

A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,

Such as would please;—'tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone:

You are welcome, gentlemen!—Come, musicians, play.

A hall! a hall⁵! give room, and foot it, girls.

[Musick plays, and they dance.]

More lights, ye knaves; and turn the tables up⁶,

⁵ An exclamation commonly used to make room in a crowd for any particular purpose, as we now say *a ring! a ring!* So Marston, *Sat.* iii.:—

‘————— *A hall! a hall!*

Roome for the spheres, the orbs celestial

Will dance Kempe's jig.’

The passages are numberless that may be cited in illustration of this phrase.

⁶ The ancient *tables* were flat leaves or *boards* joined by hinges and placed on tressels; when they were to be removed they were therefore *turned up*. The phrase is sometimes *taken up*. Thus in Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey*, ed. 1825, p. 198:—‘After that the boards-end was *taken up*.’

And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot.—
 Ah, sirrah, this unlook'd-for sport comes well.
 Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin⁷ Capulet;
 For you and I are past our dancing days:
 How long is't now, since last yourself and I
 Were in a mask?

2 *Cap.* By'r lady, thirty years.

1 *Cap.* What, man! 'tis not so much, 'tis not so much:

'Tis since the nuptial of Lucentio,
 Come pentecost as quickly as it will,
 Some five and twenty years; and then we mask'd.

2 *Cap.* 'Tis more, 'tis more: his son is elder, sir:
 His son is thirty.

1 *Cap.* Will you tell me that?
 His son was but a ward two years ago⁸.

Rom. What lady's that, which doth enrich the hand
 Of yonder knight?

Serv. I know not, sir.

Rom. O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
 It seems she⁹ hangs upon the cheek of night
 Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear:
 Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!

⁷ *Cousin* was a common expression for *kinsman*. Thus in *Hamlet*, the king, his uncle and stepfather, addresses him with—
 'But now, my *cousin* Hamlet and my son.'

⁸ This speech stands thus in the quarto of 1597:—

'Will you tell me that? it cannot be so:

His son was but a ward three years ago;

Good youths, i'faith!—Oh, youth's a jolly thing!'

There are many trifling variations in almost every speech of this play; but when they are of little consequence I have not encumbered the page with them. The last of these three lines, however, is natural and pleasing.—*Steevens*.

⁹ *Steevens* reads, with the second folio:—

'Her beauty hangs upon,' &c.

Shakspeare has the same thought in his 27th Sonnet:—

'Which like a jewel hung in ghastly night,

Makes black night beauteous, and her old face new.'

Lyly, in his *Eupheus*, has 'A fair pearl in a Morian's ear.'

So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows,
The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,
And, touching hers, make happy my rude hand.
Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

Tyb. This, by his voice, should be a Montague:—
Fetch me my rapier, boy:—What! dares the slave
Come hither, cover'd with an antick face,
To flear and scorn at our solemnity?
Now, by the stock and honour of my kin,
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

1 Cap. Why, how now, kinsman? wherefore storm
you so?

Tyb. Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe;
A villain, that is hither come in spite,
To scorn at our solemnity this night.

1 Cap. Young Romeo is't?

Tyb. 'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

1 Cap. Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone,
He bears him like a portly gentleman;
And, to say truth, Verona brags of him,
To be a virtuous and well govern'd youth:
I would not for the wealth of all this town,
Here in my house, do him disparagement:
Therefore be patient, take no note of him,
It is my will; the which if thou respect,
Show a fair presence, and put off these frowns,
An ill beseeming semblance for a feast.

Tyb. It fits, when such a villain is a guest;
I'll not endure him.

1 Cap. He shall be endur'd;
What, Goodman boy?—I say, he shall;—Go to;—
Am I the master here, or you? go to.
You'll not endure him!—God shall mend my soul—
You'll make a mutiny among my guests!
You will set cock-a-hoop! you'll be the man!

Tyb. Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

1 *Cap.*

Go to, go to.

You are a saucy boy :—Is't so, indeed?—

This trick may chance to scath¹⁰ you ;—I know what.

You must contráry me! marry, 'tis time—

Well said, my hearts :—You are a princox¹¹ ; go :—

Be quiet, or—More light, more light, for shame!—

I'll make you quiet; What!—Cheerly, my hearts.

Tyb. Patience perforce¹² with wilful choler meeting,
ing,

Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.

I will withdraw: but this intrusion shall,

Now seeming sweet, convert to bitter gall. [*Exit.*

Rom. If I profane with my unworthy hand

[*To JULIET.*

This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this—

My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand

To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

Jul. Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too
much,

Which mannerly devotion shows in this;

For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,

And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

Rom. Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

Jul. Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

Rom. O then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do¹³;

They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

¹⁰ i. e. do you an injury. The word has still this meaning in Scotland. See vol. vi. p. 175, note 8.

¹¹ A pert forward youth. The word is apparently a corruption of the Latin *præcox*.

¹² There is an old adage—'Patience perforce is a medicine for a mad dog.' To which this is an allusion.

¹³ Juliet had said before, that 'palm to palm was holy palmer's kiss.' She afterwards says, that 'palmers have lips that they must use in prayer.' Romeo replies, *That the prayer of his lips was, that they might do what hands do*; that is, that they might kiss.

Jul. Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

Rom. Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.

Thus from my lips, by yours, my sin is purg'd.

[*Kissing her*¹⁴.

Jul. Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

Rom. Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urg'd! Give me my sin again.

Jul. You kiss by the book.

Nurse. Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

Rom. What is her mother?

Nurse. Marry, bachelor!

Her mother is the lady of the house,
And a good lady, and a wise, and virtuous:
I nurs'd her daughter, that you talk'd withal:
I tell you,—he, that can lay hold of her,
Shall have the chinks.

Rom. Is she a Capulet?

O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.

Ben. Away, begone; the sport is at the best.

Rom. Ay, so I fear; the more is my unrest.

1 *Cap.* Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone;
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards¹⁵.—
Is it e'en so? Why, then I thank you all;
I thank you, honest gentlemen¹⁶; good night:—

¹⁴ The poet here, without doubt, copied from the mode of his own time; and kissing a lady in a public assembly, we may conclude, was not then thought indecorous. In King Henry VIII. Lord Sands is represented as kissing Anne Boleyn, next whom he sits at supper.

¹⁵ *Towards* is *ready, at hand*. A *banquet*, or *rere-supper*, as it was sometimes called, was similar to our dessert. See vol. iii. p. 438, note 2.

¹⁶ Here the quarto of 1597 adds:—

'I promise you, but for your company,
I would have been in bed an hour ago:
Light to my chamber, ho!'

More torches here!—Come on, then let's to bed.

Ah, sirrah [*To 2 Cap.*], by my fay, it waxes late;
I'll to my rest. [*Exeunt all but JULIET and Nurse.*]

Jul. Come hither, nurse: What is yon gentleman?

Nurse. The son and heir of old Tiberio.

Jul. What's he, that now is going out of door?

Nurse. Marry, that, I think, be young Petruchio.

Jul. What's he, that follows there, that would
not dance?

Nurse. I know not.

Jul. Go, ask his name:—if he be married,
My grave is like to be my wedding bed.

Nurse. His name is Romeo, and a Montague;
The only son of your great enemy.

Jul. My only love sprung from my only hate!
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
That I must love a loathed enemy.

Nurse. What's this? what's this?

Jul. A rhyme I learn'd even now
Of one I danc'd withal. [*One calls within, Juliet.*]

Nurse. Anon, anon:—
Come, let's away; the strangers all are gone.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter CHORUS*¹⁷.

Now old desire doth in his deathbed lie,
And young affection gapes to be his heir;
That fair¹⁸, which love groan'd for, and would die,
With tender Juliet match'd is now not fair.

¹⁷ 'This chorus is not in the first edition, quarto, 1597. Its use is not easily discovered; it conduces nothing to the progress of the play; but relates what is already known, or what the next scene will show; and relates it without adding the improvement of any moral sentiment.'—*Johnson.*

¹⁸ *Fair*, it has been already observed, was formerly used as a

Now Romeo is belov'd, and loves again,
 Alike bewitched by the charm of looks;
 But to his foe suppos'd he must complain,
 And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks
 Being held a foe, he may not have access
 To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear;
 And she as much in love, her means much less
 To meet her new-beloved any where:
 But passion lends them power, time means to meet
 Temp'ring extremities with extreme sweet. [*Exit*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *An open Place, adjoining Capulet's Garden.*

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. Can I go forward, when my heart is here
 Turn back, dull earth, and find thy centre out.

[*He climbs the Wall, and leaps down within it*

Enter BENVOLIO, and MERCUTIO.

Ben. Romeo! my cousin Romeo!

Mer.

He is wise

And, on my life, hath stolen him home to bed.

Ben. He ran this way, and leap'd this orchard wall:

Call, good Mercutio.

substantive, and was synonymous with *beauty*. See vol. i. p. 22
 The old copies read:—

'That fair for which love groan'd for,' &c.

This reading Malone defends. Steevens treats it as a corruption; and says, that *fair*, in the present instance, is used as dissyllable. See vol. iii. p. 148, note 20.

¹ See note on Julius Cæsar, vol. viii. p. 295.

Mer. Nay, I'll conjure too.—
 Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!
 Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh,
 Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied;
 Cry but—Ah me! pronounce² but—love and dove;
 Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,
 One nickname for her purblind son and heir,
 Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim³,
 When king Cophetua lov'd the beggar-maid.—
 He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not;
 The ape⁴ is dead, and I must conjure him.—
 I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
 By her high forehead, and her scarlet lip,
 By her fine foot, straight leg, and quivering thigh,
 And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,
 That in thy likeness thou appear to us.

Ben. An if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

Mer. This cannot anger him: 'twould anger him
 To raise a spirit in his mistress' circle

² This is the reading of the quarto of 1597. Those of 1599 and 1609 and the folio read *provaunt*, an evident corruption. The folio of 1632 has *couply*, meaning *couple*, which has been the reading of many modern editions. Steevens endeavours to persuade himself and his readers that *provaunt* may be right, and mean *provide*, furnish.

³ All the old copies read, *Abraham* Cupid. The alteration was proposed by Mr. Upton. It evidently alludes to the famous archer *Adam* Bell. So in Decker's *Satiromastix*:—'He shoots his bolt but seldom; but when Adam lets go, he hits.' 'He shoots at thee too, *Adam* Bell; and his arrows stick here.' The ballad alluded to is King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid, or, as it is called in some copies, 'The Song of a Beggar and a King.' It may be seen in the first volume of Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*. The following stanza Shakspeare had particularly in view:—

'The blinded boy that shoots so trim,
 From heaven down did hie;
 He drew a dart and shot at him,
 In place where he did lie.'

⁴ This phrase in Shakspeare's time was used as an expression of tenderness, like *poor fool*, &c.

Of some strange nature, letting it there stand
Till she had laid it, and conjur'd it down;
That were some spite: my invocation
Is fair and honest, and, in his mistress' name,
I conjure only but to raise up him.

Ben. Come, he hath hid himself among those trees,
To be consorted with the humorous⁵ night:
Blind is his love, and best befits the dark.

Mer. If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.
Now will he sit under a medlar tree,
And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit,
As maids call medlars, when they laugh alone⁶.—
Romeo, good night;—I'll to my truckle-bed;
This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep:
Come, shall we go?

Ben. Go, then; for 'tis in vain
To seek him here, that means not to be found.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. Capulet's Garden.

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. He jests at scars, that never felt a wound.—

[*JULIET appears above, at a Window.*
But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks!

⁵ i. e. the *humid*, the moist *dewy* night. Chapman uses the word in this sense in his translation of Homer, b. ii. edit. 1598:

‘The other gods and knights at arms slept all the
humorous night.’

And Drayton, in the thirteenth Song of his Polyolbion:—

‘—— which late the *humorous* night
Bespangled had with pearl.’

And in The Baron's Wars, canto i.:—

‘The *humorous* fogs deprive us of his light.’
Shakspeare uses the epithet, *vaporous* night,’ in Measure for Measure.

⁶ After this line in the old copies are two lines of ribaldry, which have justly been degraded to the margin:—

‘O Romeo, that she were, ah that she were
An open et cetera, thou a poprin pear.’

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!—
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid¹, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.—
It is my lady; O, it is my love:
O, that she knew she were!—
She speaks, yet she says nothing; What of that?
Her eye discourses, I will answer it.
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eye in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright,
That birds would sing, and think it were not night.
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

Jul.

Ah me!

Rom.

She speaks:—

O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art
As glorious to this sight², being o'er my head,
As is a winged messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturned wond'ring eyes
Of mortals, that fall back to gaze on him,
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds,
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

¹ i. e. be not a votary to the moon, to Diana.

² The old copies read, 'to this night.' Theobald made the emendation, which appears to be warranted by the context.

Jul. O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou
Romeo?

Deny thy father, and refuse thy name:
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

Rom. Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

[*Aside.*

Jul. 'Tis but thy name, that is my enemy;—
Thou art thyself though, not a Montague.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What's in a name? that which we call a rose,
By any other name would smell as sweet;
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes,
Without that title:—Romeo, doff thy name;
And for that name, which is no part of thee,
Take all myself.

Rom. I take thee at thy word:
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptiz'd;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

Jul. What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in
night,
So stumblest on my counsel?

Rom. By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am:
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,
Because it is an enemy to thee;
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

Jul. My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words
Of that tongue's utterance³, yet I know the sound;
Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

³ We meet with almost the same words as those here attributed to Romeo in King Edward III. a tragedy, 1596:—

'I might perceive his eye in her eye lost,
His eye to drink her sweet tongue's utterance.'

Rom. Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike⁴.

Jul. How cam'st thou hither, tell me? and wherefore?

The orchard walls are high, and hard to climb;
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

Rom. With love's light wings did I o'er-perch
these walls;

For stony limits cannot hold love out:
And what love can do, that dares love attempt,
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let⁵ to me.

Jul. If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

Rom. Alack! there lies more peril in thine eye,
Than twenty of their swords⁶; look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity.

Jul. I would not for the world they saw thee here.

Rom. I have night's cloak to hide me from their
sight;

And, but⁷ thou love me, let them find me here:
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued⁸, wanting of thy love.

⁴ i. e. if either thee *displease*. This was the usual phraseology of Shakspeare's time. So it *likes* me well; for it *pleases* me well.

⁵ i. e. no *stop*, no hinderance. Thus the quarto of 1597. The subsequent copies read, 'no *stop* to me.'

⁶ Beaumont and Fletcher have copied this thought in *The Maid in the Mill*:—

'The lady may command, sir;

She bears an eye more dreadful than your weapon.'

⁷ *But* is here again used in its exceptive sense, *without* or *unless*. See vol. i. p. 17, note 12; and vol. viii. p. 493, note 3.

⁸ i. e. *postponed*, delayed or deferred to a more distant period. So in Act iv. Sc. I:—

'I hear thou must, and nothing may *prorogue* it,

On Thursday next be married to the county.'

The whole passage above, according to my view of it, has the following construction:—'I have night to screen me;—*yet unless* thou love me, let them find me here. It were better that they ended my life at once, than to have death delayed, and to want thy love.'

Jul. By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

Rom. By love, who first did prompt me to inquire :
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore wash'd with the furthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.

Jul. Thou know'st, the mask of night is on my face;
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek,
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke; But farewell compliment!⁹
Dost thou love me? I know, thou wilt say—Ay;
And I will take thy word: yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false; at lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs¹⁰. O, gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:—
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo: but, else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond;
And therefore thou may'st think my haviour light:
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange¹¹.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou over-heard'st, ere I was ware,

⁹ i. e. farewell attention to forms.

¹⁰ This Shakspeare found in Ovid's Art of Love; perhaps in Marlowe's translation:—

'For Jove himself sits in the azure skies,
And laughs below at lovers' perjuries.'

With the following beautiful antithesis to the above lines (says Mr. Douce) every reader of taste will be gratified. It is given *memoriter* from some old play, the name of which is forgotten:—

'When lovers swear true faith, the list'ning angels
Stand on the golden battlements of heaven,
And waft their vows to the eternal throne.'

¹¹ To be distant, or shy.

My true love's passion: therefore pardon me;
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

Rom. Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear,
That tips with silver¹² all these fruit-tree tops,—

Jul. O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

Rom. What shall I swear by?

Jul. Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

Rom. If my heart's dear love—

Jul. Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract to-night:
It is too rash, too unadvis'd, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be,
Ere one can say—It lightens¹³. Sweet, good night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart, as that within my breast!

Rom. O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

Jul. What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

¹² This image struck Pope:—

'The moonbeam trembling falls,
And tips with silver all the walls.'

And in the celebrated simile at the end of the eighth Iliad:—

'And tips with silver every mountain's head.'

¹³ So in *The Miracles of Moses*, by Drayton, 1604:—

'———— lightning ceaselessly to burn,
Swifter than thought from place to place to pass,
And being gone, doth suddenly return
Ere you could say precisely what it was.'

The same thought occurs in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

All the intermediate lines from '*Sweet, good night!*' to '*Stay but a little,*' &c. were added after the first impression in 1597.

Rom. The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

Jul. I gave thee mine before thou didst request it: And yet I would it were to give again.

Rom. Would'st thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?

Jul. But to be frank, and give it thee again. And yet I wish but for the thing I have: My bounty is as boundless as the sea, My love as deep; the more I give to thee, The more I have, for both are infinite.

[Nurse *calls within.*

I hear some noise within; Dear love, adieu!

Anon, good nurse!—Sweet Montague, be true.

Stay, but a little, I will come again. [*Erit.*

Rom. O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard, Being in night, all this is but a dream, Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

Re-enter JULIET, above.

Jul. Three words, dear Romeo, and good night, indeed.

If that thy bent of love be honourable¹⁴, Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow, By one that I'll procure to come to thee,

¹⁴ In Brooke's Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet she uses nearly the same expressions:—

'— If your thought be chaste, and have on virtue ground,
If wedlock be the end and mark, which your desire hath found,

Obedience set aside, unto my parents due,
The quarrel eke that long ago between our households grew,
Both me and mine I will all whole to you betake,
And following you whereso you go, my father's house forsake:
But if by wanton love and by unlawful suit
You think in ripest years to pluck my maidenhood's dainty fruit

You are beguil'd, and now your Juliet you beseeks
To cease your suit, and suffer her to live among her likes.'

Where, and what time, thou wilt perform the rite;
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,
And follow thee my lord throughout the world:

Nurse. [*Within.*] Madam.

Jul. I come anon:—But if thou mean'st not well,
I do beseech thee,—

Nurse. [*Within.*] Madam.

Jul. By and by, I come:—
To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief:
To-morrow will I send.

Rom. So thrive my soul,—

Jul. A thousand times good night! [*Exit.*

Rom. A thousand times the worse, to want thy
light.—

Love goes toward love, as school-boys from their
books;

But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.
[*Retiring slowly.*

Re-enter JULIET, above.

Jul. Hist! Romeo, hist!—O, for a falconer's voice,
To lure this tassel-gentle¹⁵ back again!
Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;
Else would I tear the cave¹⁶ where echo lies,
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine
With repetition of my Romeo's name.

Rom. It is my soul, that calls upon my name;

¹⁵ The *tassel*, or *tiercel* (for so it should be spelt), is the male of the *goshawk*, and is said to be so called because it is a *tierce* or *third* less than the female. This is equally true of all birds of prey. This species of hawk had the epithet of *gentle* annexed to it, from the ease with which it was tamed, and its attachment to man. Tardif, in his book of Falconry, says that the *tiercel* has its name from being one of three birds usually found in the *aerie* of a falcon, two of which are females, and the *third* a male; hence called *tiercelet*, or the *third*. According to the old books of sport the falcon *gentle* and *tiercel gentle* are birds for a prince.

¹⁶ This strong expression is more suitably employed by Milton:—

'A shout that tore hell's concave—.'

How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
Like softest musick to attending ears!

Jul. Romeo!

Rom. My sweet¹⁷!

Jul. At what o'clock to-morrow
Shall I send to thee?

Rom. At the hour of nine.

Jul. I will not fail; 'tis twenty years till then.
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

Rom. Let me stand here till thou remember it.

Jul. I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Rememb'ring how I love thy company.

Rom. And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,
Forgetting any other home but this.

Jul. 'Tis almost morning, I would have thee gone;
And yet no further than a wanton's bird;
Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
And with a silk thread plucks it back again,
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

Rom. I would, I were thy bird.

Jul. Sweet, so would I;
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
Good night, good night! parting is such sweet
sorrow,
That I shall say—good night, till it be morrow.

[*Exit.*

Rom. Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy
breast!—

'Would, I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!
Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell;
His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell. [*Exit.*

¹⁷ The quarto of 1597 puts the cold, distant, and formal appellation *Madam* into the mouth of Romeo. The two subsequent quartos and the folio have 'my *niece*,' which is a palpable corruption; but it is difficult to say what word was intended. 'My *sweet*' is the reading of the second folio.

SCENE III. Friar Laurence's Cell.

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE, with a Basket.

Fri. The gray-ey'd morn smiles on the frowning night¹,
 Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light;
 And flecked² darkness like a drunkard reels
 From forth day's path-way, made by Titan's wheels³:
 Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye,
 The day to cheer, and night's dank dew to dry,
 I must fill up this osier cage of ours,
 With baleful weeds, and precious-juiced flowers⁴,

¹ In the folio and the three later quartos these four lines are printed twice over, and given once to Romeo and once to the Friar.

² *Flecked* is spotted, dappled, streaked, or variegated. Lord Surrey uses the word in his translation of the fourth *Æneid*:—

'Her quivering cheekes *flecked* with deadly stain.'

So in the old play of *The Four Prentices*:—

'We'll *fleck* our white steeds in your Christian blood.'

³ This is the reading of the second folio. The quarto of 1597 reads:—

'From forth day's path *and* Titan's *fry* wheels.'

The quarto of 1599 and the folio have '*burning* wheels.'

⁴ So Drayton, in the eighteenth Song of his *Polyolbion*, speaking of a hermit:—

'His happy time he spends the works of God to see,
 In those so sundry herbs which there in plenty grow,
 Whose sundry strange effects he only seeks to know.
 And in a little *maund*, being made of *oziers* small,
 Which serveth him to do full many a thing withal,
 He very choicely sorts his simples got abroad.'

Shakspeare has very artificially prepared us for the part Friar Lawrence is afterwards to sustain. Having thus early discovered him to be a chemist, we are not surprised when we find him furnishing the draught which produces the catastrophe of the piece. The passage was, however, suggested by Arthur Brooke's poem.

The earth, that's nature's mother, is her tomb⁵;
 What is her burying grave, that is her womb:
 And from her womb children of divers kind
 We sucking on her natural bosom find;
 Many for many virtues excellent,
 None but for some, and yet all different.
 O, mickle is the powerful grace⁶, that lies
 In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities:
 For nought so vile that on the earth doth live,
 But to the earth some special good doth give;
 Nor aught so good, but, strain'd from that fair use,
 Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:
 Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied;
 And vice sometime's by action dignified.
 Within the infant rind of this small flower
 Poison hath residence, and med'cine power:
 For this, being smelt, with that part⁷ cheers each part;
 Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.
 Two such opposed foes encamp them still⁸
 In man as well as herbs, grace, and rude will;

⁵ ' Omniparens, eadem rerum commune sepulchrum.'

Lucretius.

' The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave.' *Milton.*

' ——— Time's the king of men,

For he's their parent, and he is their grave.' *Pericles.*

⁶ Efficacious virtue.

⁷ i. e. with its *odour*. Not, as Malone says, 'with the olfactory nerves, the part that smells.'

⁸ So in Shakspeare's *Lover's Complaint* :—

' ——— terror and dear modesty

Encamp'd in hearts, but fighting outwardly.

Our poet has more than once alluded to these *opposed foes*. So in *Othello* :—

' Yea, curse his *better angel* from his side.'

See also his forty-fourth Sonnet. He may have remembered a passage in the old play of *King Arthur*, 1587 :—

' Peace hath three *foes encamped* in our breasts,
 Ambition, wrath, and envie.'

And, where the worser is predominant,
Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. Good morrow, father!

Fri. *Benedicite!*

What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?—
Young son, it argues a distemper'd head,
So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed:
Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,
And where care lodges, sleep will never lie;
But where unbruised youth with unstuff'd brain
Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth
reign:

Therefore thy earliness doth me assure,
Thou art uprous'd by some distemp'rature;
Or if not so, then here I hit it right—
Our Romeo hath not been in bed to-night.

Rom. That last is true, the sweeter rest was mine.

Fri. God pardon sin! wast thou with Rosaline?

Rom. With Rosaline, my ghostly father? no;
I have forgot that name, and that name's woe.

Fri. That's my good son: But where hast thou
been then?

Rom. I'll tell thee, ere thou ask it me again.
I have been feasting with mine enemy;
Where on a sudden, one hath wounded me,
That's by me wounded; both our remedies
Within thy help and holy physick lies⁹:

⁹ This apparent false concord occurs in many places, not only of Shakspeare, but of all old English writers. It is sufficient to observe that in the Anglo Saxon and very old English the third person plural of the present tense ends in *eth*, and often familiarly in *es*, as might be exemplified from Chaucer and others. This idiom was not worn out in Shakspeare's time, who must not therefore be tried by rules which were invented after his

I bear no hatred, blessed man; for, lo,
My intercession likewise steads my foe.

Fri. Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drill
Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.

Rom. Then plainly know, my heart's dear lo
is set

On the fair daughter of rich Capulet:
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine;
And all combin'd, save what thou must combine
By holy marriage: When, and where, and how,
We met, we woo'd, and made exchange of vow,
I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
That thou consent to marry us this day.

Fri. Holy Saint Francis! what a change is her
Is Rosaline, whom thou didst love so dear,
So soon forsaken? young men's love then lies
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.

Jesu Maria! what a deal of brine
Hath wash'd thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline!
How much salt water thrown away in waste,
To season love, that of it doth not taste!
The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,
Thy old groans ring yet in my ancient ears;
Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit
Of an old tear that is not wash'd off yet:
If e'er thou wast thyself, and these woes thine,
Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline;
time. We have the same grammatical construction in Cym
line:—

‘ His steeds to water at those springs
On chalic'd flowers that *lies*.’

And in *Venus and Adonis*:—

‘ She lifts the coffer lids that close his eyes
Where lo! *two lamps* burnt out in darkness *lies*.’

Again in a former scene of this play:—

‘ And bakes the elf locks in foul sluttish *hairs*,
Which once untangled much misfortune *bodes*.’

And art thou chang'd? pronounce this sentence
then—

Women may fall, when there's no strength in men.

Rom. Thou chid'st me oft for loving Rosaline.

Fri. For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.

Rom. And bad'st me bury love.

Fri. Not in a grave,

To lay one in, another out to have.

Rom. I pray thee, chide not: she, whom I love now,
Doth grace for grace, and love for love allow;
The other did not so.

Fri. O, she knew well,

Thy love did read by rote, and could not spell.

But come, young waverer, come go with me,

In one respect I'll thy assistant be;

For this alliance may so happy prove,

To turn your households' rancour to pure love.

Rom. O, let us hence; I stand on sudden haste¹⁰.

Fri. Wisely, and slow; they stumble, that run fast. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. A Street.

Enter BENVOLIO *and* MERCUTIO.

Mer. Where the devil should this Romeo be?—
Came he not home to-night?

Ben. Not to his father's; I spoke with his man.

Mer. Ah, that same pale hard-hearted wench,
that Rosaline.

Torments him so, that he will sure run mad.

Ben. Tybalt, the kinsman of old Capulet,
Hath sent a letter to his father's house.

¹⁰ 'It is incumbent upon me, or it is of importance to me to use extreme haste.' So in King Richard III.:—

' ——— it stands me much upon
To stop all hopes,' &c.

Mer. A challenge, on my life.

Ben. Romeo will answer it.

Mer. Any man, that can write, may answer a letter.

Ben. Nay, he will answer the letter's master, how he dares, being dared.

Mer. Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead! stabbed with a white wench's black eye; shot thorough the ear with a love-song; the very pin of his heart cleft with the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft¹: And is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

Ben. Why, what is Tybalt?

Mer. More than prince of cats², I can tell you. O, he is the courageous captain of compliments. He fights as you sing prick-song, keeps time, distance, and proportion; rests me his minim rest, one, two, and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button³, a duellist, a duellist; a

¹ The allusion is to archery. The clout, or white mark at which the arrows were directed, was fastened by a black *pin*, placed in the centre of it. To hit this was the highest ambition of every marksman. So in *No Wit like a Woman's*, a comedy by Middleton, 1657:—

‘ They have shot two arrows without heads,
They cannot stick i'the but yet: hold out, knight,
And I'll *cleave* the *black pin* i'the midst of the white.’

So in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*:—

‘ For kings are clouts that every man shoots at,
Our crown the *pin* that thousands seek to *cleave*.’

See vol. ii. p. 348, note 10.

² *Tybert*, the name given to a cat in the old story book of Reynard the Fox. So in Decker's *Satiromastix*:—

‘ Tho' you were *Tybert*, prince of long tailed cats.’

Again, in *Have With You to Saffron Walden*, by Nash:—‘ Not *Tibalt* prince of cats.’

³ So in *The Return from Parnassus*:—

‘ Strikes his poinado at a *button's* breadth.’

The phrase also occurs in the *Fantaisies de Bruscombile*, 1612, p. 181:—‘ Un coup de mousquet sans fourchette dans le sixième bouton.’

gentleman of the very first house,—of the first and second cause⁴: Ah, the immortal passado! the punto reverso! the hay⁵!

Ben. The what?

Mer. The pox of such antick, lispings, affecting fantasticoes; these new tuners of accents!—*By Jesu, a very good blade!—a very tall man!—a very good whore!*—Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandsire⁶, that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these *par-donnez-moys*, who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench⁷? O, their *bons*, their *bons*!

Enter ROMEO.

Ben. Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

Mer. Without his roe, like a dried herring:—O, flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified!—Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flowed in: Laura, to his lady, was but a kitchen wench;—marry, she had a better love to be-rhyme her: Dido, a dowdy; Cleo-

⁴ i. e. a gentleman of the first rank, or highest eminence, among these duellists; and one who understands the whole science of quarrelling, and will tell you of the *first cause*, and the *second cause* for which a man is to fight. The clown, in *As You Like It*, talks of the *seventh cause* in the same sense.

⁵ All the terms of the fencing school were originally Italian: the rapier, or small thrusting sword, being first used in Italy. The *hay* is the word *hai*, you *have* it, used when a thrust reaches the antagonist. Our fencers on the same occasion cry out *ha*!

⁶ Humorously apostrophising his ancestors, whose sober times were unacquainted with the fopperies here complained of.

⁷ During the ridiculous fashion which prevailed of great 'boulstered breeches' (See Strutt's *Manners and Customs*, vol. iii. p. 86; Strype's *Annals*, vol. i. p. 78, Appendix; vol. ii. Appendix, note 17), it is said that it was necessary to cut away hollow places in the benches of the House of Commons, to make room for those monstrous protuberances, without which those *who stood on the new FORM* could not sit at ease on the old bench.

patra, a gipsy; Helen and Hero, hildings and harlots; Thisbé, a grey eye or so⁸, but not to the purpose.—Signior Romeo, *bon jour*! there's a French salutation to your French slop⁹. You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

Rom. Good morrow to you both. What counterfeit did I give you?

Mer. The slip, sir, the slip¹⁰: Can you not conceive?

Rom. Pardon, good Mercutio, my business was great; and, in such a case as mine, a man may strain courtesy.

Mer. That's as much as to say—such a case as yours constrains a man to bow in the hams.

Rom. Meaning—to court'sy.

Mer. Thou hast most kindly hit it.

Rom. A most courteous exposition.

Mer. Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

Rom. Pink for flower.

Mer. Right.

Rom. Why, then is my pump well flowered¹¹.

Mer. Well said: Follow me this jest now, till thou hast worn out thy pump; that, when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain, after the wearing, solely singular.

Rom. O single-soled¹² jest, solely singular for the singleness.

⁸ A *grey eye* appears to have meant what we now call a *blue eye*. He means to admit that Thisbe had a tolerable fine eye.

⁹ The *slop* was a kind of wide kneed breeches, or rather trowsers. See vol. ii. p. 358.

¹⁰ See vol. vii. p. 365, note 3.

¹¹ Here is a vein of wit too thin to be easily found. The fundamental idea is, that Romeo wore *pinked* pumps, that is punched with holes in figures. It was the custom to wear ribbons in the shoes formed in the shape of roses or other flowers. Thus in *The Masque of Gray's Inn, 1614*:—'Every masker's *pump* was fastened with a *flower* suitable to his cap.'

¹² *Malone* and *Steevens* have made strange work with their

Mer. Come between us, good Benvolio; my wits fail.

Rom. Switch and spurs, switch and spurs; or I'll cry a match.

Mer. Nay, if thy wits run the wild-goose chase¹³, I have done; for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one of thy wits, than, I am sure, I have in my whole five: Was I with you there for the goose?

Rom. Thou wast never with me for any thing, when thou wast not there for the goose.

Mer. I will bite thee by the ear for that jest.

Rom. Nay, good goose, bite not.

Mer. Thy wit is a very bitter sweetening¹⁴; it is a most sharp sauce.

Rom. And is it not well served in to a sweet goose?

conjectures of the meaning of *single-soled*. I have shown (vol. v. p. 270, note 20) that *single* meant *simple*, silly. *Single soled* had also the same meaning:—‘He is a good *sengyll soule*, and can do no harm; *est doli nescius non simplex*.’—*Horman's Vulgaria*. So in Hall's Second Satire of his second book:—

‘And scorne contempt itselfe that doth excite
Each *single sol'd* squire to set you at so light.’

The ‘*single soule* kings,’ in the passage from Holinshed, the ‘*single sole* fidler,’ and the ‘*single soal'd* gentlewoman,’ in the other extracts, were all *simple* persons. It sometimes was synonymous with *THREADBARE*, *coarse spun*, and this is its meaning here. The worthy Cotgrave explains ‘*Monsieur de trois au boisseau et de trois à un épée*: a threadbare, coarse-spun, *single-soled* gentleman.’

¹³ One kind of horserace which resembled the flight of *wild geese*, was formerly known by this name. Two horses were started together, and which ever rider could get the lead, the other rider was obliged to follow him wherever he choose to go, This explains the pleasantry kept up here. ‘My wit fails,’ says Mercutio. Romeo exclaims briskly, ‘Switch and spurs, switch and spurs.’ To which Mercutio rejoins, ‘Nay, if thy wits run the *wild goose chase*,’ &c. Burton mentions this sport, *Anat. of Melan.* p. 266, edit. 1632. See also the article *Chace* in Chambers's Dictionary.

¹⁴ The allusion is to an apple of that name.

Mer. O, here's a wit of cheverel¹⁵, that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad !

Rom. I stretch it out for that word—broad : which added to the goose, proves thee far and wide a broad goose.

Mer. Why, is not this better now than groaning for love ? now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo ; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature : for this drivelling love is like a great natural, that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole¹⁶.

Ben. Stop there, stop there.

Mer. Thou desirest me stop in my tale against the hair¹⁷.

Ben. Thou would'st else have made thy tale large.

Mer. O, thou art deceiv'd, I would have made it short : for I was come to the whole depth of my tale : and meant, indeed, to occupy the argument no longer.

Rom. Here's goodly geer !

Enter Nurse and PETER.

Mer. A sail, a sail, a sail !

Ben. Two, two ; a shirt, and a smock.

Nurse. Peter !

Peter. Anon ?

Nurse. My fan, Peter¹⁸.

¹⁵ Soft stretching leather, kid leather. See vol. vii. p. 218, note 6.

¹⁶ See vol. iii. p. 315, note 4.

¹⁷ This phrase, which is of French extraction, *à contre poil*, occurs again in *Troilus and Cressida*, vol. vii. p. 324 :—' Merry against the hair.'

¹⁸ The business of Peter carrying the *Nurse's fan*, seems ridiculous to modern manners, but it was formerly the practice. In *The Serving Man's Comfort*, 1598, we are informed ' The

Mer. 'Pr'ythee, do, good Peter, to hide her face ;
for her fan's the fairer of the two.

Nurse. God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

Mer. God ye good den¹⁹, fair gentlewoman.

Nurse. Is it good den ?

Mer. 'Tis no less, I tell you ; for the bawdy hand
of the dial is now upon the prick²⁰ of noon.

Nurse. Out upon you ! what a man are you ?

Rom. One, gentlewoman, that God hath made
himself to mar.

Nurse. By my troth, it is well said ;—For him-
self to mar, quoth'a ?—Gentlemen, can any of you
tell me where I may find the young Romeo ?

Rom. I can tell you ; but young Romeo will be
older when you have found him, than he was when
you sought him : I am the youngest of that name,
for 'fault of a worse.

Nurse. You say well.

Mer. Yea, is the worst well ? very well took,
i'faith ; wisely, wisely.

Nurse. If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence
with you.

Ben. She will indite him to some supper.

Mer. A bawd, a bawd, a bawd ! So ho !

Rom. What hast thou found ?

Mer. No hare, sir ; unless a hare, sir, in a lenten
pie, that is something stale and hoar ere it be spent.

mistresse must have one to carry her cloake and hood, another
her *fanne*.' So in *Love's Labour's Lost* :—' To see him walk be-
fore a lady, and to *bear her fan*.'

¹⁹ i. e. ' God give you a good *even*.' The first of these con-
tractions is common in our old dramas. So in *Brome's Northern*
Lass :—' *God you good even*, sir.'

²⁰ So in *King Henry VI. Part III. Act i. Sc. 4* :—

' And made an evening at the noontide *prick*.'

i. e. the *point* of noon. A *prick* is a *point*, a note of distinction
in writing, a stop. So in *Bright's Character, or Arte of Short*
Writing, 1588 :—' If the worde end in ed, as I loved, then make
a *pricke* in the character of the word on the left side.

*An old hare hoar*²¹,
And an old hare hoar,
Is very good meat in lent :
But a hare that is hoar,
Is too much for a score,
When it hoars ere it be spent.—

Romeo, will you come to your father's? we'll to dinner thither.

Rom. I will follow you.

Mer. Farewell, ancient lady; farewell, lady, lady, lady²².

[*Exeunt* MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO.

Nurse. Marry, farewell!—I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant²³ was this, that was so full of his ropery²⁴?

Rom. A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk; and will speak more in a minute, than he will stand to in a month.

Nurse. An 'a speak any thing against me, I'll take him down an 'a were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks; and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills; I am none of his skains-mates²⁵:—And thou

²¹ *Hoar*, or hoary, is often used for *mouldy*, as things grow white from moulding. These lines seem to have been part of an old song. In the quarto, 1597, we have this stage direction: '*He walks by them* [i. e. the Nurse and Peter] *and sings.*'

²² The burthen of an old song. See *Twelfth Night*, Act ii. Sc. 3.

²³ See vol. vi. p. 41, note 6.

²⁴ *Ropery* was anciently used in the same sense as *roguery* is now. So in *The Three Ladies of London*, 1584:—

'Thou art very pleasant, and full of thy *roperye.*'
 See vol. iii. p. 268, note 10.

²⁵ By *skains-mates* the old lady probably means *swaggering companions*. A *skain*, or *skean*, was an Irish knife or dagger, a weapon suitable to the purpose of ruffling fellows. Green, in his *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, describes 'an ill favoured knave, who wore by his side a *skeine*, like a brewer's bung knife.'

must stand by too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?

Pet. I saw no man use you at his pleasure; if I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you: I dare draw as soon as another man, if I see occasion in a good quarrel, and the law on my side.

Nurse. Now, afore God, I am so vexed, that every part about me quivers. Scurvy knave! - 'Pray you, sir, a word: and as I told you, my young lady bade me inquire you out; what she bade me say, I will keep to myself: but first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behaviour, as they say: for the gentlewoman is young; and, therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly, it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

Rom. Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest unto thee,—

Nurse. Good heart! and, i'faith, I will tell her as much: Lord, lord, she will be a joyful woman.

Rom. What wilt thou tell her, nurse? thou dost not mark me.

Nurse. I will tell her, sir,—that you do protest; which, as I take it, is a gentlemanlike offer.

Rom. Bid her devise some means to come to shrift This afternoon;

And there she shall at friar Laurence' cell
Be shriv'd, and married. Here is for thy pains.

Nurse. No, truly, sir; not a penny.

Rom. Go to; I say, you shall.

Nurse. This afternoon, sir? well, she shall be there.

Rom. And stay, good nurse, behind the abbey-wall:

Within this hour my man shall be with thee ;
And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair²⁶,
Which to the high top-gallant of my joy
Must be my convoy in the secret night.
Farewell!—Be trusty, and I'll quit thy pains.
Farewell!—Commend me to thy mistress.

Nurse. Now God in heaven bless thee!—Hark
you, sir.

Rom. What say'st thou, my dear nurse?

Nurse. Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear
say—

Two may keep counsel, putting one away?

Rom. I warrant thee; my man's as true as steel.

Nurse. Well, sir; my mistress is the sweetest
lady,—lord, lord!—when 'twas a little prating
thing²⁷,—O,—there's a nobleman in town, one
Paris, that would fain lay knife aboard: but she,
good soul, had as lieve see a toad, a very toad, as
see him. I anger her sometimes, and tell her that
Paris is the properer man: but, I'll warrant you,
when I say so, she looks as pale as any clout in the
varsal world. Doth not rosemary and Romeo be-
gin both with a letter²⁸?

Rom. Ay, nurse; What of that? both with an R.

²⁶ i. e. like stairs of rope in the tackle of a ship. A stair, for a flight of stairs, is still the language of Scotland, and was once common to both kingdoms.

²⁷ So in Arthur Brooke's poem:—

'A pretty babe, quoth she, it was, when it was young,
Lord, how it could full prettily have *prated* with its tongue.'

²⁸ The Nurse is represented as a prating, silly creature; she says that she will tell Romeo a good joke about his mistress, and asks him whether rosemary and Romeo do not both begin with a letter: he says, Yes, an R. She, whom we must suppose could not read, thought he mocked her, and says, No, sure I know better, R is the dog's name, your's begins with some other letter. This is natural enough, and in character. R put her in mind of that sound which dogs make when they snarl. Ben

Nurse. Ah, mocker! that's the dog's name. *R* is for the dog. No; I know it begins with some other letter: and she hath the prettiest sententious of it, of you and rosemary, that it would do you good to hear it.

Rom. Commend me to thy lady. [*Exit.*

Nurse. Ay, a thousand times.—Peter!

Pet. Anon?

Nurse. Peter, take my fan, and go before.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. Capulet's Garden.

Enter JULIET.

Jul. The clock struck nine, when I did send the nurse;

In half an hour she promis'd to return.

Perchance, she cannot meet him: that's not so.—

O, she is lame! love's heralds should be thoughts¹,

Jonson, in his English Grammar, says '*R is the dog's letter, and hirreth in the sound.*'

'*Irritata canis quod R. R. quam plurima dicat.*'

Lucil.

Nashe, in Summer's Last Will and Testament, 1600, speaking of dogs, says:—

'*They arre and barke at night against the moone.*'

And Barclay, in his Ship of Fooles, pleasantly exemplifies it:—

'*This man malicious which troubled is with wrath,*

Nought els soundeth but the hoorse letter R,

Though all be well, yet he none aunswere hath,

Save the dogges letter glowming with nar, nar.'

Erasmus, in explaining the adage '*Canina facundia*,' says, '*R, litera quæ in rixando prima est, canina vocatur.*' It is used more than once in this sense in Rabelais. And in the Alchemist, Subtle says, in making out Abel Drugger's name, '*And right anenst him a dog snarling er.*'

¹ The speech is thus continued in the quarto, 1597:—

'*———— should be thoughts,*

And run more swift than hasty powder fir'd

Doth hurry from the fearful cannon's mouth.

Oh, now she comes! Tell me, gentle nurse,

What says my love?'

The greatest part of this scene is likewise added since that

Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,
 Driving back shadows over lowering hills :
 Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love,
 And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.
 Now is the sun upon the highmost hill
 Of this day's journey ; and from nine till twelve
 Is three long hours,—yet she is not come.
 Had she affections, and warm youthful blood,
 She'd be as swift in motion as a ball ;
 My words would bandy her to my sweet love,
 And his to me :
 But old folks, many feign as they were dead ;
 Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

Enter Nurse and PETER.

O God, she comes !—O honey nurse, what news ?
 Hast thou met with him ? Send thy man away.

Nurse. Peter, stay at the gate. [*Exit PETER.*]

Jul. Now, good sweet nurse,—O lord ! why
 look'st thou sad ?

Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily ;
 If good, thou sham'st the musick of sweet news
 By playing it to me with so sour a face.

Nurse. I am weary, give me leave awhile ;—
 Fye, how my bones ache ! What a jaunt have I had !

Jul. I would, thou hadst my bones, and I thy news :
 Nay, come, I pray thee, speak ;—good, good nurse,
 speak.

Nurse. Jesu, what haste ? can you not stay
 awhile ?

Do you not see, that I am out of breath ?

edition. Shakspeare, however, seems to have thought one of the ideas comprised in the foregoing quotation from the earliest quarto too valuable to be lost. He has, therefore, inserted it in Romeo's first speech to the Apothecary, in Act v. :—

' As violently as hasty powder fir'd

Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.'

Jul. How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath

To say to me—that thou art out of breath?

The excuse, that thou dost make in this delay,

Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.

Is thy news good, or bad? answer to that;

Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance:

Let me be satisfied, Is't good or bad?

Nurse. Well, you have made a simple choice; you know not how to choose a man: Romeo! no, not he; though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all men's; and for a hand, and a foot, and a body,—though they be not to be talked on, yet they are past compare: He is not the flower of courtesy,—but, I'll warrant him, as gentle as a lamb.—Go thy ways, wench; serve God.—What, have you dined at home?

Jul. No, no: But all this did I know before; What says he of our marriage? what of that?

Nurse. Lord, how my head akes! what a head have I?

It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.

My back o't'other side,—O, my back, my back!—

Beshrew your heart, for sending me about,

To catch my death with jaunting up and down!

Jul. I'faith, I am sorry that thou art not well:

Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?

Nurse. Your love says like an honest gentleman, And a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome, And, I warrant, a virtuous:—Where is your mother?

Jul. Where is my mother?—why, she is within; Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest?

Your love says like an honest gentleman,—

Where is your mother?

Nurse.

O, god's lady dear!

Are you so hot? Marry, come up, I trow;
Is this the poultice for my aking bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

Jul. Here's such a coil,—come, what says Romeo?

Nurse. Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

Jul. I have.

Nurse. Then hie you hence to friar Laurence's cell,
There stays a husband to make you a wife:
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
They'll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church; I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird's nest soon, when it is dark:
I am the drudge, and toil in your delight;
But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
Go, I'll to dinner; hie you to the cell.

Jul. Hie to high fortune!—honest nurse, farewell.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. Friar Laurence's Cell.

*Enter FRIAR LAURENCE and ROMEO*¹.

Fri. So smile the heavens upon this holy act,
That after-hours with sorrow chide us not!

Rom. Amen, amen! but come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy
That one short minute gives me in her sight:
Do thou but close our hands with holy words,
Then love-devouring death do what he dare,
It is enough I may but call her mine.

Fri. These violent delights have violent ends²,

¹ This scene is exhibited in quite another form in the first quarto, 1597. But it is hardly worth exhibiting here in its original state. The reader may see it in the variorum Shakspeare, or in the play as published by Steevens among the twenty quartos.

² So in Shakspeare's Rape of Lucrece:—

‘These violent vanities can never last.’

And in their triumph die ! like fire and powder,
Which, as they kiss, consume : The sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness,
And in the taste confounds the appetite:
Therefore, love moderately : long love doth so ;
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow³.

Enter JULIET.

Here comes the lady :—O, so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint⁴ :
A lover may bestride the gossomers⁵
That idle in the wanton summer air,
And yet not fall ; so light is vanity.

Jul. Good even to my ghostly confessor.

Fri. Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.

Jul. As much to him, else are his thanks too much.

Rom. Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy
Be heap'd like mine, and that thy skill be more
To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath
This neighbour air, and let rich musick's tongue
Unfold the imagin'd happiness that both
Receive in either by this dear encounter.

³ ' He that travels too fast is as long before he comes to the end of his journey as he that travels slow. Precipitation produces mishap.'—*Johnson*.

⁴ This passage originally stood thus :—

' Youth's love is quick, swifter than swiftest speed,
See where she comes !—
So light a foot ne'er hurts the trodden flower ;
Of love and joy, see, see, the sovereign power !'

However the poet might think the alteration of this scene on the whole to be necessary, I am afraid (says Steevens) in respect of the passage before us, he has not been very successful. The violent hyperbole of *never wearing out the everlasting flint*, appears not only more reprehensible, but even less beautiful than the lines as they were originally written, where the lightness of Juliet's motion is accounted for from the cheerful effects the passion of love produced in her mind.

⁵ See *King Lear*, Act iv. Sc. 6, note 9.

Jul. Conceit⁶, more rich in matter than in words,
 Brags of his substance, not of ornament:
 They are but beggars that can count their worth⁷;
 But my true love is grown to such excess,
 I cannot sum up half my sum of wealth.

Fri. Come, come with me, and we will make
 short work;
 For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone,
 Till holy church incorporate two in one. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A public Place.*

*Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, Page, and
 Servants.*

Ben. I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire;
 The day is hot¹, the Capulets abroad,
 And, if we meet, we shall not 'scape a brawl;
 For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

Mer. Thou art like one of those fellows, that
 when he enters the confines of a tavern, claps me
 his sword upon the table, and says, *God send me
 no need of thee!* and, by the operation of the second

⁶ *Conceit* here means *imagination*. Vide *Hamlet*, Act iii. Sc. 4, note; and vol. iii. p. 201, note 5.

⁷ So in *Antony and Cleopatra*:—

‘There's beggary in the love that can be reckon'd.’

¹ It is observed, that, in Italy, almost all assassinations are committed during the heat of summer. In *Sir Thomas Smith's Commonwealth of England*, 1583, b. ii. c. xix. p. 70, it is said:—
 ‘And commonly every yeere, or each second yeere, in the beginning of sommer or afterwards (*for in the warme time the people for the most part be more unruly*) even in the calme time of peace, the prince with his council chooseth out,’ &c.

cup, draws it on the drawer, when, indeed, there is no need.

Ben. Am I like such a fellow?

Mer. Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy; and as soon moved to be moody, and as soon moody to be moved.

Ben. And what to?

Mer. Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou! why thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more, or a hair less, in his beard, than thou hast. Thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes: What eye, but such an eye, would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels, as an egg is full of meat; and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg, for quarrelling. Thou hast quarrelled with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun. Didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? with another, for tying his new shoes with old riband? and yet thou wilt tutor me from quarrelling²!

Ben. An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee simple of my life for an hour and a quarter.

Mer. The fee simple? O simple³!

Enter TYBALT, and Others.

Ben. By my head, here come the Capulets.

Mer. By my heel, I care not.

² i. e. thou wilt endeavour to restrain me by prudential advice from quarrelling.

³ This and the foregoing speech have been added since the first quarto, with some few circumstances in the rest of the scene, as well as in the *ensuing one*.

Tyb. Follow me close, for I will speak to them.—
Gentlemen, good den : a word with one of you.

Mer. And but one word with one of us ? Couple it
with something ; make it a word and a blow.

Tyb. You will find me apt enough to that, sir, if
you will give me occasion.

Mer. Could you not take some occasion without
giving ?

Tyb. Mercutio, thou consortest with Romeo,—

Mer. Consort⁴ ! what, dost thou make us min-
strels ? an thou make minstrels of us, look to hear
nothing but discords : here's my fiddlestick ; here's
that shall make you dance. 'Zounds, consort !

Ben. We talk here in the public haunt of men :
Either withdraw into some private place,
Or reason coldly of your grievances,
Or else depart ; here all eyes gaze on us.

Mer. Men's eyes were made to look, and let them
gaze ;
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

Enter ROMEO.

Tyb. Well, peace be with you, sir ! here comes
my man.

Mer. But I'll be hanged, sir, if he wear your
livery :

Marry, go before to field, he'll be your follower ;
Your worship, in that sense, may call him—man.

Tyb. Romeo, the hate I bear thee, can afford
No better term than this—Thou art a villain.

Rom. Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee
Doth much excuse the appertaining rage

⁴ To comprehend Mercutio's captious indignation, it should be remembered that *a consort* was the old term for a set or company of musicians. See vol. i. p. 152, note 7.

To such a greeting:—Villain am I none;
Therefore farewell; I see, thou know'st me not.

Tyb. Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries
That thou hast done me; therefore turn, and draw.

Rom. I do protest, I never injured thee;
But love thee better than thou canst devise,
Till thou shalt know the reason of my love:
And so, good Capulet,—which name I tender
As dearly as mine own,—be satisfied.

Mer. O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!
*A la stoccata*⁵ carries it away. [Draws.
Tybalt, you rat catcher, will you walk?

Tyb. What would'st thou have with me?

Mer. Good king of cats⁶, nothing, but one of
your nine lives; that I mean to make bold withal,
and, as you shall use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest
of the eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his
pilcher⁷ by the ears? make haste, lest mine be about
your ears ere it be out.

Tyb. I am for you. [Drawing.

Rom. Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

Mer. Come, sir, your passado. [They fight.

Rom. Draw, Benvolio:

Beat down their weapons:—Gentlemen, for shame
Forbear this outrage;—Tybalt—Mercutio—
The prince expressly hath forbid this bandying
In Verona streets:—hold, Tybalt;—good Mercutio.

[Exeunt TYBALT and his Partizans.

Mer. I am hurt;—

A plague o' both the houses!—I am sped:—
Is he gone, and hath nothing?

⁵ The Italian term for a thrust or stab with a rapier.

⁶ Alluding to his name. See Act ii. Sc. 4, note 2.

⁷ Warburton says that we should read *pilche*, which signifies a coat or covering of skin or leather; meaning the scabbard. A *pilche* or leathern coat seems to have been the common dress of a carman. The old copy reads—*scabbard*.

[illegible]

Ben.

What, art thou hurt?

Mer. Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry, 'tis enough.—

Where is my page?—go, villain, fetch a surgeon.

[*Exit Page.*

Rom. Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

Mer. No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve: ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man⁸. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world:—A plague o'both your houses!—Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! a braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetick!—Why, the devil, came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

Rom. I thought all for the best.

Mer. Help me into some house, Benvolio, Or I shall faint.—A plague o'both your houses! They have made worm's meat of me: I have it, and soundly too:—Your houses!

[*Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO.*

⁸ After this the quarto, 1597, continues Mercutio's speech as follows:—

'——A pox o'both your houses! I shall be fairly mounted upon four men's shoulders for your house of the Montague's and the Capulets: and then some peasantly rogue, some sexton, some base slave, shall write my epitaph, that Tybalt came and broke the prince's laws, and Mercutio was slain for the first and second cause. Where's the surgeon?

'*Boy.* He's come, sir.

'*Mer.* Now he'll keep a mumbling in my guts on the other side.—Come, Benvolio, lend me thy hand: A pox o'both your houses!'

As for the jest, 'You shall find me a *grave* man,' it was better in old language than it is at present; Lidgate says, in his *Elegy* upon Chaucer:—

'My master Chaucer now is *grave*.'

In Sir Thomas Overbury's description of a Sexton, *Characters*, 1616, we have it again:—'At every church-style commonly there's an ale-house; where let him be found never so idled, hee is still a *grave drunkard*.'

Rom. This gentleman, the prince's near ally,
My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt
In my behalf; my reputation stain'd
With Tybalt's slander, Tybalt, that an hour
Hath been my kinsman:—O sweet Juliet,
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate,
And in my temper soften'd valour's steel.

Re-enter BENVOLIO.

Ben. O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio's dead;
That gallant spirit hath aspir'd⁹ the clouds,
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

Rom. This day's black fate on more days doth
depend¹⁰;
This but begins the woe, others must end.

Re-enter TYBALT.

Ben. Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

Rom. Alive! in triumph! and Mercutio slain!
Away to heaven, respective lenity¹¹,
And fire-ey'd fury be my conduct¹² now!—
Now, Tybalt, take the *villain* back again,
That late thou gav'st me; for Mercutio's soul
Is but a little way above our heads,

⁹ We never use the verb *aspire*, at present, without some particle, as *to* and *after*. There are numerous ancient examples of a similar use of it with that in the text: thus Marlowe, in his *Tamburlaine*:—

‘ Until our bodies turn to elements,
And both our souls *aspire* celestial thrones.’

So in Chapman's version of the ninth *Iliad*:—

‘ ——— and *aspir'd* the gods eternal feats.’

¹⁰ This day's unhappy destiny *hangs over* the days yet to come. There will yet be more mischief.

¹¹ ‘ *Respective lenity*’ is ‘considerative gentleness.’ See vol. iii. p. 97, note 16.

¹² *Conduct* for *conductor*.

Staying for thine to keep him company ;
Either thou, or I, or both, must go with him.

Tyb. Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him
here,
Shalt with him hence.

Rom.

This shall determine that.

[*They fight ; TYBALT falls.*

Ben. Romeo, away, be gone !
The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain :
Stand not amaz'd :—the prince will doom thee death,
If thou art taken :—hence !—be gone !—away !

Rom. O ! I am fortune's fool¹³ !

Ben.

Why dost thou stay ?

[*Exit ROMEO.*

Enter Citizens, &c.

1 *Cit.* Which way ran he, that kill'd Mercutio ?
Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he ?

Ben. There lies that Tybalt.

1 *Cit.* Up, sir, go with me ;
I charge thee in the prince's name, obey.

*Enter Prince, attended ; MONTAGUE, CAPULET,
their Wives, and Others.*

Prin. Where are the vile beginners of this fray ?

Ben. O noble prince, I can discover all
The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl :
There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.

¹³ In the first quarto, ' O ! I am fortune's slave.' Shakspeare is very fond of alluding to the *mockery* of fortune. Thus we have in *Lear* :—' I am the natural fool of fortune.' And in *Timon of Athens* :—' Ye fools of fortune.' In *Julius Cæsar* the expression is, ' He is but fortune's knave.' Hamlet speaks of ' the fools of nature.' And in *Measure for Measure* we have ' merely thou art death's fool.' See *Pericles*, Act iii. Sc. 2, p. 315, note 7.

La. Cap. Tybalt, my cousin!—O my brother's child!

Unhappy sight! ah me, the blood is spill'd
Of my dear kinsman!—Prince, as thou art true¹⁴,
For blood of ours, shed blood of Montague.
O cousin, cousin!

Prin. Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

Ben. Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did
slay;

Romeo that spoke him fair, bade him bethink
How nice¹⁵ the quarrel was, and urg'd withal
Your high displeasure:—All this—uttered
With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly
bow'd,—

Could not take truce with the unruly spleen
Of Tybalt deaf to peace, but that he tilts
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast;
Who, all as hot, turns deadly point to point,
And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats
Cold death aside, and with the other sends
It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity
Retorts it: Romeo he cries aloud,
Hold, friends! friends, part! and, swifter than his
tongue,

His agile arm beats down their fatal points,
And 'twixt them rushes; underneath whose arm
An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled:

¹⁴ As thou art *just* and *upright*. So in King Richard III.:—
'And if King Edward be as *true* and *just*.'

¹⁵ *Nice* here means *silly*, *trifling*, or *wanton*. See vol. iii.
p. 393, note 6. So in the last Act:—

'The letter was not *nice*, but full of charge
Of dear import.'

The rest of this speech was new written after the appearance of
the first copy, by the poet, as well as a part of what follows in
the same scene.

But by and by comes back to Romeo,
Who had but newly entertain'd revenge,
And to't they go like lightning; for, ere I
Could draw to part them, was stout Tybalt slain;
And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly;
This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

La. Cap. He is a kinsman to the Montague,
Affection makes him false¹⁶; he speaks not true:
Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,
And all those twenty could but kill one life:
I beg for justice, which thou, prince, must give;
Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

Prin. Romeo slew him, he slew Mercutio;
Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe?

Mon. Not Romeo, prince, he was Mercutio's
friend;
His fault concludes but, what the law should end,
The life of Tybalt.

Prin. And, for that offence,
Immediately we do exile him hence:
I have an interest in your hates' proceeding,
My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a bleeding;
But I'll amerce you with so strong a fine,
That you shall all repent the loss of mine:
I will be deaf to pleading and excuses;
Nor tears, nor prayers, shall purchase out abuses,
Therefore use none: let Romeo hence in haste,
Else, when he's found, that hour is his last.
Bear hence this body, and attend our will:
Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill¹⁷.

[*Exeunt.*

¹⁶ 'The charge of falsehood on Benvolio, though produced at hazard, is very just. The author, who seems to intend the character of Benvolio as good, meant perhaps to show how the best minds, in a state of faction and discord, are distorted to criminal partiality.'—*Johnson*.

¹⁷ See a maxim of Judge Hales, cited in vol. ii. p. 35, note 8.

might come, to prevent discovery. Mr. Justice Blackstone can perceive nothing *optative* in the lines, but simply a *reason* for Juliet's wish for a cloudy night; yet, according to this construction of the passage, the grammar is not very easily to be discovered. Whoever attentively reads over Juliet's speech will be inclined to think, or even to be altogether satisfied, that the whole *tenor* of it is *optative*. With respect to the calling night a *run-away*, one might surely ask how it can possibly be so termed in an *abstract point of view*? Is it a greater fugitive than the morning, the noon, or the evening? Mr. Steevens

That run-aways eyes may wink

Furness in his *Variarium* ed of this play
in an appendix a special article of 2
printed pages filled with the emend.
discussions of commentators on this
word runaways, which Mr F. J. F.
(the Academy March 21. 1874) ch
up as a word "used in Elizabeth's
James' time as equivalent with
gadabout, prier or runaway or
vagabondizer that Julius alludes to
supporting this by citations from
Cotgrave's Dictionary 1611. Julius
simply invokes right to shield
and her lover from the sight of
any roaming vagabond or char-
acters who might be in the way
talk about it afterwards.

— those that kill 17.

[*Exeunt.*

¹⁶ 'The charge of falsehood on Benvolio, though produced at hazard, is very just. The author, who seems to intend the character of Benvolio as good, meant perhaps to show how the best minds, in a state of faction and discord, are distorted to criminal partiality.'—Johnson.

¹⁷ See a maxim of Judge Hales, cited in vol. ii. p. 35, note 8.

SCENE II. *A Room in Capulet's House.*

Enter JULIET.

Jul. Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds¹,
Towards Phœbus' mansion; such a waggoner
As Phaeton would whip you to the west,
And bring in cloudy night immediately².—
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night!
That run-away's eyes may wink³; and Romeo

The sentiment here enforced is different from that found in the first edition, 1597. There the Prince concludes his speech with these words:—

'Pity shall dwell, and govern with us still;
Mercy to all but murderers,—pardoning none that kill.'

¹ The poet probably remembered Marlowe's King Edward II. which was performed before 1593:—

'Gallop apace, bright Phœbus, through the skie,
And duskie night in rusty iron car;
Between you both, shorten the time, I pray,
That I may see that most desired day.'

There is also a passage in Barnabe Riche's Farewell to the Militarie Profession, 1583, which bears some resemblance to this.

² Here ends this speech in the original quarto. The rest of the scene has likewise received considerable alterations and additions.

³ A great deal of ingenious criticism has been bestowed in endeavouring to ascertain the meaning of this expression. Dr. Warburton thought that the *run-away* in question was the *sun*; but Mr. Heath has most completely disproved this opinion. Mr. Steevens considers the passage as extremely elliptical, and regards the *night* as the *run-away*; making Juliet wish that its eyes, the stars, might retire, to prevent discovery. Mr. Justice Blackstone can perceive nothing *optative* in the lines, but simply a *reason* for Juliet's wish for a cloudy night; yet, according to this construction of the passage, the grammar is not very easily to be discovered. Whoever attentively reads over Juliet's speech will be inclined to think, or even to be altogether satisfied, that the whole *tenor* of it is *optative*. With respect to the calling night a *run-away*, one might surely ask how it can possibly be so termed in *an abstract point of view*? Is it a greater fugitive than the morning, the noon, or the evening? Mr. Steevens

Leap to these arms, untalk'd of, and unseen !—
 Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
 By their own beauties⁴ : or, if love be blind,
 It best agrees with night.—Come, civil⁵ night,
 Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,
 And learn me how to lose a winning match,
 Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods :
 Hood my unmann'd blood bating in my cheeks⁶,
 With thy black mantle; till strange love, grown bold,
 Think true love acted, simple modesty.
 Come, night !—Come, Romeo ! come, thou day in
 night !

For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
 Whiter than new snow upon a raven's back.—

lays great stress on Shakspeare's having before called the night
 a *run-away* in *The Merchant of Venice* :—

' For the close night doth play the *run-away*.'

But there it was already far advanced, and might therefore with
 great propriety be said to *play the run-away* ; here it was not be-
 gun. The same remark will apply to the passage cited from the
Fair Maid of the Exchange. Where then is this *run-away* to be
 found? or can it be Juliet herself? She who had just been
 secretly married to the enemy of her parents might with some
 propriety be termed a *run-away from her duty* ; but she had not
 abandoned her native pudency. She therefore invokes the night
 to veil those rites which she was about to perform, and to bring
 her Romeo to her arms in darkness and silence. The lines that
 immediately follow may be thought to favour this interpretation;
 and the whole scene may possibly bring to the reader's recollec-
 tion an interesting part in the beautiful story of Cupid and
 Psyche.—*Douce*.

⁴ So in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* :—

' ——— dark night is Cupid's day.'

Milton, in his *Comus*, might have been indebted to Shakspeare :—

' Virtue can see to do what virtue would
 By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
 Were in the flat sea sunk.'

⁵ *Civil* is grave, solemn.

⁶ These are terms of falconry. An *unmanned* hawk is one
 that is not brought to endure company. *Bating* is fluttering or
 beating the wings as striving to fly away.

Come, gentle night; come, loving, black-brow'd night⁷,

Give me my Romeo: and, when he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine,
That all the world will be in love with night,
And pay no worship to the garish⁸ sun.—
O, I have bought the mansion of a love,
But not possess'd it; and, though I am sold,
Not yet enjoy'd: So tedious is this day,
As is the night before some festival
To an impatient child, that hath new robes,
And may not wear them. O, here comes my nurse,

Enter Nurse, with Cords.

And she brings news: and every tongue, that speaks
But Romeo's name, speaks heavenly eloquence.—
Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there, the
cords,

That Romeo bade thee fetch?

Nurse.

Ay, ay, the cords.

[Throws them down.]

Jul. Ah me! what news! why dost thou wring
thy hands?

Nurse. Ah well-a-day! he's dead, he's dead, he's
dead!

We are undone, lady, we are undone!—

Alack the day!—he's gone, he's kill'd, he's dead!

Jul. Can heaven be so envious?

Nurse.

Romeo can,

⁷ 'Why here walk I, in the black brow of night.'

King John.

⁸ Milton had this speech in his thoughts when he wrote *Il Penseroso*:—

'Hide me from day's garish eye.'

Hence also 'Till civil-suited morn appear.' *Garish* is gaudy,
glittering.

Though heaven cannot:—O Romeo ! Romeo !—
Who ever would have thought it?—Romeo !

Jul. What devil art thou, that dost torment me
thus ?

This torture should be roar'd in dismal hell.
Hath Romeo slain himself? say thou but *I*⁹,
And that bare vowel *I* shall poison more
Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice¹⁰ :
I am not *I*, if there be such an *I* ;
Or those eyes shut, that make thee answer, *I*.
If he be slain, say—*I* ; or if not, no :
Brief sounds determine of my weal, or woe.

Nurse. I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes,—
God save the mark¹¹ !—here on his manly breast :
A piteous corse, a bloody piteous corse ;
Pale, pale as ashes, all bedawb'd in blood,
All in gore blood ; I swooned at the sight.

Jul. O break, my heart !—poor bankrupt, break
at once !

To prison, eyes ! ne'er look on liberty !
Vile earth, to earth resign ; end motion here ;
And thou, and Romeo, press one heavy bier !

Nurse. O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had !
O courteous Tybalt ! honest gentleman !
That ever I should live to see thee dead !

Jul. What storm is this, that blows so contrary ?
Is Romeo slaughter'd : and is Tybalt dead ?
My dear-lov'd cousin, and my dearer lord ?—
Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general doom !
For who is living, if those two are gone ?

Nurse. Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished ;
Romeo, that kill'd him, he is banished.

⁹ In Shakspeare's time the affirmative particle *ay* was usually written *I*, and here it is necessary to retain the old spelling.

¹⁰ See what is said of the basilisk, King Henry VI. Part II. Act iii. Sc. 2.

¹¹ See Othello, Act i. Sc. 1.

Jul. O God!—did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?

Nurse. It did, it did; alas the day! it did.

Jul. O serpent heart, hid with a flow'ring face¹²!
 Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
 Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!
 Dove-feather'd raven! volvish-ravening lamb!
 Despised substance of divinest show!
 Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,
 A damned saint, an honourable villain!—
 O, nature! what hadst thou to do in hell,
 When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend
 In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh?
 Was ever book, containing such vile matter,
 So fairly bound? O, that deceit should dwell
 In such a gorgeous palace!

Nurse. There's no trust,
 No faith, no honesty in men; all perjur'd,
 All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers.—
 Ah, where's my man? give me some *aqua vitæ*:—
 These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.
 Shame come to Romeo!

Jul. Blister'd be thy tongue,
 For such a wish! he was not born to shame:
 Upon his brow shame is asham'd to sit;

¹² The same image occurs in Macbeth:—

‘—— look like the innocent flower,
 But be the *serpent* under it.’

The succeeding line has its parallel in King John:—

‘Rash, inconsiderate, fiery voluntaries,
 With ladies' faces and fierce dragons' spleens.’

Again in King Henry VIII.:—

‘You have angels' faces, but Heaven knows your hearts.’

The line ‘*Did ever dragon,*’ &c. and the following eight lines, are not in the quarto, 1597.

So in Painter's Palace of Pleasure, tom. ii. p. 223:—‘Is it possible that under such beautie and rare comelinesse, disloyaltie and treason may have their siege and lodging?’

For 'tis a throne where honour may be crown'd
Sole monarch of the universal earth.

O, what a beast was I to chide at him!

Nurse. Will you speak well of him that kill'd
your cousin?

Jul. Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?
Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth¹³ thy
name,

When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it?—
But wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?
That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband:
Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring;
Your tributary drops belong to woe,
Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy¹⁴.
My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;
And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my husband:

All this is comfort: Wherefore weep I then?
Some word there was, worser than Tybalt's death,
That murder'd me; I would forget it fain;
But, O! it presses to my memory,
Like damned guilty deeds to sinners' minds;
Tybalt is dead, and Romeo—banished:
That—*banished*, that one word—*banished*,
Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts¹⁵. Tybalt's death
Was woe enough, if it had ended there:
Or,—if sour woe delights in fellowship,
And needly will be rank'd with other griefs,—
Why follow'd not, when she said—Tybalt's dead,

¹³ To *smooth* is to flatter, to *speak fair*; it is here metaphorically used for to mitigate or assuage the asperity of censure with which Romeo's name would be now mentioned. See vol. ix. p. 275, note 9.

¹⁴ So in *The Tempest*:—

' ——— I am a fool

To weep at what I'm glad of.'

¹⁵ i. e. is worse than the loss of ten thousand Tybalts.'

Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both,
 Which modern¹⁶ lamentation might have mov'd?
 But, with a rear-ward following Tybalt's death,
Romeo is banished,—to speak that word,
 Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
 All slain, all dead:—*Romeo is banished*,—
 There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
 In that word's death; no words can that woe sound.—
 Where is my father, and my mother, nurse?

Nurse. Weeping and wailing over Tybalt's corse:
 Will you go to them? I will bring you thither.

Jul. Wash they his wounds with tears? mine
 shall be spent,
 When theirs are dry, for Romeo's banishment.
 Take up those cords:—Poor ropes, you are beguil'd,
 Both you and I; for Romeo is exil'd:
 He made you for a highway to my bed;
 But I, a maid, die maiden-widowed.
 Come, cords; come, nurse; I'll to my wedding bed;
 And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead!

Nurse. Hie to your chamber: I'll find Romeo
 To comfort you:—I wot well where he is.
 Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night;
 I'll to him; he is hid at Laurence' cell.

Jul. O find him! give this ring to my true knight,
 And bid him come to take his last farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. Friar Laurence's Cell.

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE and ROMEO.

Fri. Romeo, come forth; come forth, thou fearful
 man;

Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts,
 And thou art wedded to calamity.

¹⁶ *Modern* is trite, common. So in *As You Like It*:—

'Full of wise saws, and *modern* instances.'

Rom. Father, what news? what is the prince's doom?

What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand,
That I yet know not?

Fri. Too familiar

Is my dear son with such sour company:
I bring thee tidings of the prince's doom.

Rom. What less than dooms-day is the prince's doom?

Fri. A gentler judgment vanish'd from his lips,
Not body's death, but body's banishment.

Rom. Ha! banishment? be merciful, say—death:
For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more than death: do not say—banishment.

Fri. Hence from Verona art thou banished:
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.

Rom. There is no world without Verona walls,
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.
Hence-banished is banish'd from the world,
And world's exile is death:—then banishment
Is death misterm'd: calling death—banishment,
Thou cut'st my head off with a golden axe,
And smil'st upon the stroke that murders me.

Fri. O deadly sin! O rude unthankfulness!
Thy fault our law calls death; but the kind prince,
Taking thy part, hath rush'd aside the law,
And turn'd that black word death to banishment:
This is dear mercy¹, and thou seest it not.

Rom. 'Tis torture, and not mercy: heaven is here,
Where Juliet lives²; and every cat, and dog,
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,

¹ The quarto, 1597, reads 'This is *mere* mercy,' i. e. *absolute* mercy.

² From this and the foregoing speech of Romeo, Dryden has borrowed in his beautiful paraphrase of Chaucer's Palamon and Arcite:—

'Heaven is not but where Emily abides,
And where she's absent all is hell besides.'

Live here in heaven, and may look on her,
 But Romeo may not.—More validity³,
 More honourable state, more courtship lives
 In carrion flies, than Romeo: they may seize
 On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,
 And steal immortal blessing from her lips;
 Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,
 Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin;
 But Romeo may not; he is banished:
 Flies may do this, when I from this must fly:
 They are free men, but I am banished.
 And say'st thou yet, that exile is not death?
 Hadst thou no poison mix'd, no sharp-ground knife,
 No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,
 But—banished—to kill me; banished?
 O friar, the damned use that word in hell;
 Howlings attend it: How hast thou the heart,
 Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,
 A sin-absolver, and my friend profess'd,
 To mangle me with that word—banishment?

³ *Validity* is again employed to signify *worth*, *value*, in the first scene of *King Lear*.

By *courtship*, *courtesy*, *courtly behaviour* is meant. See vol. iii. p. 136, note 32. As this is one of the words which have escaped the industry of Shakspeare's editors, it may be as well to elucidate its meaning fully. Bullokar defines 'compliment to be ceremony, *court-ship*, fine behaviour.' See also Cotgrave in *Curtisanie* and *Curialité*; and Florio in *Cortegiania*. 'Would I might never excell a Dutch skipper in *courtship*, if I did not put distate into my carriage of purpose, I knew I should not please them.'—*Sir Giles Goosecap*, a Comedy. Again, in the same play:—'My lord, my want of *courtship* makes me fear I should be rude.'

'Whilst the young lord of Telamon, her husband,
 Was packeted to France, to study *courtship*,
 Under, forsooth, a colour of employment.'

Ford's Fancies Chaste and Noble.

See also Gifford's *Massinger*, vol. ii. p. 505, where the true meaning of the word has not escaped the acute and able editor.

Fri. Thou fond mad man, hear me but speak a word.

Rom. O, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

Fri. I'll give thee armour to keep off that word;
Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy⁴,
To comfort thee, though thou art banished.

Rom. Yet banished?—Hang up philosophy!
Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,
Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom;
It helps not, it prevails not, talk no more.

Fri. O, then I see that madmen have no ears.

Rom. How should they, when that wise men have
no eyes?

Fri. Let me dispute with thee of thy estate⁵.

Rom. Thou canst not speak of what thou dost not
feel:

Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,
An hour but married, Tybalt murdered,
Doting like me, and like me banished,
Then might'st thou speak, then might'st thou tear
thy hair,

And fall upon the ground, as I do now,
Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

⁴ So in the poem of *Romeus and Juliet*, the Friar says:—

‘Virtue is always thrall to troubles and annoy,

But *wisdom in adversity* finds cause of quiet joy.’

See also Lyly's *Euphues*, 1580:—‘Thou sayest *banishment* is bitter to the freeborne. There be many meates which are sowre in the mouth and sharp in the maw; but if thou mingle them with sweet *sawces*, they yeeld both a pleasant taste and wholesome nourishment.—I speake this to this end, that though thy *exile* seem grievous to thee, yet guiding thyself with the rules of *philosophy* it shall be more tolerable.’

⁵ The same phrase, and with the same meaning, occurs in *The Winter's Tale*:—

‘———— can he speak? hear?

Know man from man? *dispute his own estate*?

i. e. is he able to talk over his own affairs, or the present state he is in?

Fri. Arise; one knocks; good Romeo, hide thyself.
[*Knocking within.*]

Rom. Not I; unless the breath of heart-sick groans,
Mistlike, infold me from the search of eyes.

[*Knocking.*]

Fri. Hark, how they knock!—Who's there?—
Romeo, arise;
Thou wilt be taken:—Stay awhile: stand up;

[*Knocking.*]

Run to my study:—By and by:—God's will!
What wilfulness is this?—I come, I come.

[*Knocking.*]

Who knocks so hard? whence come you? what's
your will?

Nurse. [*Within.*] Let me come in, and you shall
know my errand;
I come from Lady Juliet.

Fri. Welcome then.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. O holy friar, O tell me, holy friar,
Where is my lady's lord, where's Romeo?

Fri. There on the ground, with his own tears
made drunk.

Nurse. O, he is even in my mistress' case,
Just in her case!

Fri. O woful sympathy!
Piteous predicament!

Nurse. Even so lies she,
Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering:—
Stand up, stand up; stand, an you be a man:
For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand;
Why should you fall into so deep an O?

Rom. Nurse!

Nurse. Ah sir! ah sir!—Well, death's the end
of all.

Rom. Spak'st thou of Juliet? how is it with her?
 Doth she not think me an old murderer,
 Now I have stain'd the childhood of our joy
 With blood remov'd but little from her own?
 Where is she? and how doth she? and what says
 My conceal'd lady⁶ to our cancell'd love?

Nurse. O, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and
 weeps;
 And now falls on her bed; and then starts up,
 And Tybalt calls; and then on Romeo cries,
 And then falls down again.

Rom. As if that name,
 Shot from the deadly level of a gun,
 Did murder her; as that name's cursed hand
 Murder'd her kinsman.—O tell me, friar, tell me,
 In what vile part of this anatomy
 Doth my name lodge? tell me, that I may sack
 The hateful mansion. [*Drawing his Sword.*]

Fri. Hold thy desperate hand:
 Art thou a man? thy form cries out, thou art;
 Thy tears are womanish; thy wild acts denote
 The unreasonable fury of a beast⁷:
 Unseemly woman, in a seeming man!
 Or ill beseeming beast, in seeming both!
 Thou hast amaz'd me: by my holy order,
 I thought thy disposition better temper'd.
 Hast thou slain Tybalt? wilt thou slay thyself?

⁶ The epithet *concealed* is to be understood, not of the person, but of the condition of the lady; so that the sense is, 'My lady, whose being so, together with our marriage which made her so, is concealed from the world.'

⁷ Shakspeare has here followed the poem:—

'Art thou, quoth he, a man? thy shape saith, so thou art,
 Thy crying and thy weeping eyes denote a woman's heart,
 For manly reason is quite from off thy mind outchased,
 And in her stead affections lewd, and fancies highly placed;
 So that I stood in doubt, this hour at the least,
 If thou a man or woman wert, or else a brutish beast.'

And slay thy lady too that lives in thee,
 By doing damned hate upon thyself?
 Why rail'st thou on thy birth⁸, the heaven, and earth?
 Since birth, and heaven, and earth, all three do meet
 In thee at once; which thou at once would'st lose.
 Fye, fye! thou sham'st thy shape, thy love, thy wit;
 Which, like a usurer, abound'st in all,
 And usest none in that true use indeed
 Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit.
 Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,
 Digressing from the valour of a man⁹:
 Thy dear love, sworn, but hollow perjury,
 Killing that love which thou hast vow'd to cherish:
 Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,
 Misshapen in the conduct of them both,
 Like powder in a skill-less soldier's flask¹⁰,
 Is set on fire by thine own ignorance,

⁸ Romeo has not here railed on his birth, &c. though in his interview with the Friar, as described in the poem, he is made to do so. Shakspeare copied the remonstrance of the Friar, without reviewing the former part of this scene. He has in other places fallen into a similar inaccuracy, by sometimes following and sometimes deserting his original. The lines from *Why rail'st thou on thy birth*, &c. to *thy own defence*, are not in the first copy, they are formed on a passage in the poem.

⁹ So in King Richard II. Act v. Sc. 3:—

‘And thy abundant goodness shall excuse
 This deadly blot in thy *digressing* son.’

And in Barnabe Riche's Farewell:—‘Knowing that you should otherwise have used me than you have, you should have *digressed* and swarved from your kind.’

¹⁰ To understand the force of this allusion, it should be remembered that the ancient English soldiers, using match locks, instead of locks with flints, as at present, were obliged to carry a lighted *match* hanging at their belts, very near to the wooden *flask* in which they carried their powder. The same allusion occurs in Humor's Ordinary, an old collection of English Epigrams:—

‘When she his *flask* and touch-box set on fire,
 And till this hour the burning is not out.’

And thou dismember'd with thine own defence¹¹.
What, rouse thee, man! thy Juliet is alive,
For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead;
There art thou happy: Tybalt would kill thee,
But thou slew'st Tybalt; there art thou happy too:
The law, that threaten'd death, becomes thy friend,
And turns it to exile; there art thou happy:
A pack of blessings lights upon thy back;
Happiness courts thee in her best array;
But, like a misbehav'd and sullen wench,
Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love:
Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.
Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed,
Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her;
But, look, thou stay not till the watch be set,
For then thou canst not pass to Mantua;
Where thou shalt live, till we can find a time
To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,
Beg pardon of the prince, and call thee back
With twenty hundred thousand times more joy
Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.—
Go before, nurse: commend me to thy lady;
And bid her hasten all the house to bed,
Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto:
Romeo is coming¹².

Nurse. O Lord, I could have staid here all the
night,

To hear good counsel: O, what learning is!—
My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

Rom. Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide

Nurse. Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you, sir
Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late.

[*Exit Nurse*

¹¹ And thou torn to pieces with thine own weapons.

¹² Much of this speech has also been added since the first edition.

Rom. How well my comfort is reviv'd by this!

Fri. Go hence: Good night! and here stands all
your state¹³;

Either be gone before the watch be set,
Or by the break of day disguis'd from hence:
Sojourn in Mantua; I'll find out your man,
And he shall signify from time to time
Every good hap to you, that chances here:
Give me thy hand; 'tis late: farewell; good night.

Rom. But that a joy past joy calls out on me,
It were a grief, so brief to part with thee:
Farewell. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *A Room in Capulet's House.*

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and PARIS.

Cap. Things have fallen out, sir, so unluckily,
That we have had no time to move our daughter:
Look you, she lov'd her kinsman Tybalt dearly,
And so did I;—Well, we were born to die.—
'Tis very late, she'll not come down to-night:
I promise you, but for your company,
I would have been a-bed an hour ago.

Par. These times of woe afford no time to woo:
Madam, good night: commend me to your daughter.

La. Cap. I will, and know her mind early to-morrow:
To-night she's mew'd up to her heaviness.

Cap. Sir Paris, I will make a desperate¹ tender
Of my child's love: I think, she will be rul'd
In all respects by me; nay more, I doubt it not.

¹³ The whole of your fortune depends on this.

¹ *Desperate* means only *bold, adventurous*, as if he had said in the vulgar phrase, I will speak a *bold* word, and *venture* to promise you my daughter.—*Johnson.*

'Witness this *desperate tender* of mine honour.'

Weakest goes to the Wall, 1600.

Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed ;
Acquaint her here of my son Paris' love ;
And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next—
But, soft ; What day is this ?

Par. Monday, my lord.

Cap. Monday ? ha ! ha ! Well, Wednesday is
too soon,

O'Thursday let it be ;—o'Thursday, tell her,
She shall be married to this noble earl :—
Will you be ready ? do you like this haste ?
We'll keep no great ado ;—a friend, or two :—
For hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,
It may be thought we held him carelessly,
Being our kinsman, if we revel much :
Therefore we'll have some half a dozen friends,
And there an end. But what say you to Thursday ?

Par. My lord, I would that Thursday were to-morrow.

Cap. Well, get you gone :—O'Thursday be it then :—

Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed,
Prepare her, wife, against this wedding-day.—
Farewell, my lord.—Light to my chamber, ho !
Afore me, it is so very late, that we
May call it early by and by :—Good night ².

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. Juliet's Chamber ¹.

Enter ROMEO and JULIET.

Jul. Wilt thou be gone ? it is not yet near day :
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierc'd the fearful hollow of thine ear ;

² The latter part of this scene is a good deal varied from the first quarto.

¹ The stage direction in the first edition is, '*Enter* Romeo and

Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree²:
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

Rom. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
Night's candles are burnt out³, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops;
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

Jul. Yon light is not daylight, I know it, I:
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer⁴,

Juliet at a Window. In the second quarto, 'Enter Romeo and Juliet aloft.' They appeared, probably, in the balcony which was erected on the old English stage. See Malone's Account of the Ancient Theatres, in vol. iii. of Boswell's edition of Shakespeare.

² This is not merely a poetical supposition. It is observable that the nightingale, if undisturbed, sits and sings upon the same tree for many weeks together. [As almost all birds sing only during the period of incubation, this may be accounted for; the male bird sings near where the female is sitting.] What Eustathius has observed relative to a *fig-tree* mentioned by Homer, in his twelfth Odyssey, may be applied to the passage before us:—'These particularities, which seem of no consequence, have a very good effect in poetry, as they give the relation an air of truth and probability. For what can induce a poet to mention such a tree, if the tree were not there in reality.'—*Steevens*.

³ Thus Sophocles:—

‘ ——— ἄκρας νυκτὸς, ἡνίχ' ἔσπεροι
λαμπητῆρες οὐκέτ' ἦσθον.' *Ajax*, 288. .

⁴ Compare Sidney's *Arcadia*, 13th edition, p. 109:—'The moon, then full (not thinking scorn to be a *torch-bearer* to such beauty), guided her steps.' And Sir John Davies's *Orchestra*, st. vii. of the Sun:—

‘ When the great *torch-bearer* of heaven was gone
Downe in a maske unto the ocean's court.'

And Drayton, *Eng. Heroic Epist.* p. 221, where the moon is described with the stars—

‘ Attending on her as her *torch-bearers*.'

And light thee on thy way to Mantua:

Therefore stay yet, thou need'st not to be gone⁵.

Rom. Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.

I'll say, yon gray is not the morning's eye,

'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;

Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat

The vaulty heaven so high above our heads;

I have more care to stay, than will to go;—

Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.—

How is't, my soul? let's talk, it is not day.

Jul. It is, it is, hie hence, be gone, away:

It is the lark that sings so out of tune,

Straining harsh discords, and displeasing sharps.

Some say, the lark makes sweet division⁶;

This doth not so, for she divideth us:

Some say, the lark and loathed toad chang'd eyes⁷;

⁵ The quarto, 1597, reads:—

'Then stay awhile, thou shalt not go [so] soon.'

The succeeding speech, I think, (says Mr. Boswell) is better in the same copy:—

'Let me stay here, let me ta'en, and die;

If thou wilt have it so, I am content.

I'll say yon gray is not the morning's eye,

It is the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;

I'll say it is the nightingale that beats

The vaulty heaven so far above our heads,

And not the lark, the messenger of morn:

Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so,—

What says my love? let's talk, 'tis not yet day.'

⁶ A *division*, in music, is a variation of melody upon some given fundamental harmony. See King Henry IV. Part 1. Act iii. Sc. 1:—

'Sung by a fair queen in a summer's bower,

With ravishing *division* to her lute.'

This verse Mr. Stephen Weston observes might serve for a translation of a line in Horace:—

'——— grataque foeminis

Imbelli cithara carmina *divides*.'

⁷ The toad having very fine eyes and the lark very ugly ones.

O, now I would they had chang'd voices too!
 Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,
 Hunting thee hence with hunts-up⁸ to the day.
 O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.

Rom. More light and light?—more dark and dark
 our woes.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Madam!

Jul. Nurse?

Nurse. Your lady mother's coming to your chamber:

The day is broke; be wary, look about.

[*Exit Nurse.*

Jul. Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

Rom. Farewell, farewell! one kiss, and I'll descend.
 [ROMEO descends.

Jul. Art thou gone so? my love! my lord! my friend!

was the occasion of a common saying that *the toad and the lark had changed eyes*. This tradition was expressed in a rustic rhyme:—

‘————— To heav'n I'd fly,

But that the toad beguil'd me of mine eye.'

The sense of the passage is, the lark, they say, has changed eyes with the toad, and now I would they had changed voices too, since the lark's *song* serves but to separate us. The *croak* of the toad would have been no indication of the appearance of day, and consequently no signal for her lover's departure.

⁸ The *hunt's up* was originally a tune played to wake sportsmen, and call them together. It was a common burthen of hunting ballads. Pattenham says that one Gray grew into good estimation with the Duke of Somerset for making certain merry ballads, whereof one chiefly was *the hunte is up, the hunte is up*. One of these ballads is given by Mr. Douce in his *Illustrations of Shakspeare*, vol. ii. p. 192. According to Cotgrave the *Reveille*, or morning song to a new married woman, was called the *hunt's up*. So Drayton, in his *Polyolbion*:—

‘But *hunt's up* to the morn, the feather'd sylvans sing.'

And in his third Eclogue:—

‘Time plays the *hunt's up* to thy sleepy head.'

I must hear from thee every day i'the hour,
 For in a minute there are many days :
 O ! by this count I shall be much in years⁹,
 Ere I again behold my Romeo.

Rom. Farewell ! I will omit no opportunity
 That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

Jul. O, think'st thou, we shall ever meet again ?

Rom. I doubt it not ; and all these woes shall serve
 For sweet discourses in our time to come.

Jul. O God ! I have an ill-divining soul¹⁰ :
 Methinks, I see thee, now thou art below,
 As one dead in the bottom of a tomb :
 Either my eyesight fails, or thou look'st pale.

Rom. And trust me, love, in my eye so do you :
 Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu ! adieu !

[*Exit* ROMEO.]

Jul. O fortune, fortune ! all men call thee fickle :
 If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him
 That is renown'd for faith ? Be fickle, fortune ;
 For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,
 But send him back.

La. Cap. [*Within.*] Ho, daughter ! are you up ?

Jul. Who is't that calls ? is it my lady mother ?
 Is she not down so late, or up so early ?
 What unaccustom'd cause procures¹¹ her hither ?

⁹ ' Illa ego, quæ fueram te decedente puella,
 Protinus ut redeas, facta videbor anus.'

Ovid. Epist. 1.

¹⁰ This miserable prescience of futurity I have always regarded as a circumstance peculiarly beautiful. The same kind of warning from the mind, Romeo seems to have been conscious of on his going to the entertainment at the house of Capulet:—

' ————— My mind misgives me,
 Some consequence yet hanging in the stars,
 Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
 From this night's revels.'

Steevens.

¹¹ *Procures* for brings.

Enter LADY CAPULET.

La. Cap. Why, how now, Juliet?

Jul. Madam, I am not well.

La. Cap. Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?

What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?
An if thou could'st, thou could'st not make him live;
Therefore, have done: Some grief shows much of love:

But much of grief shows still some want of wit.

Jul. Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.

La. Cap. So shall you feel the loss, but not the friend

Which you weep for.

Jul. Feeling so the loss,
I cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

La. Cap. Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his death,

As that the villain lives which slaughter'd him.

Jul. What villain, madam?

La. Cap. That same villain, Romeo.

Jul. Villain and he are many miles asunder.
God pardon him! I do with all my heart;
And yet no man, like he, doth grieve my heart.

La. Cap. That is, because the traitor murderer lives.

Jul. Ay, madam, from the reach of these my¹² hands.

'Would, none but I might venge my cousin's death!

La. Cap. We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not:

Then weep no more. I'll send to one in Mantua,—
Where that same banish'd runagate doth live,—

¹² 'Juliet's equivocations are rather too artful for a mind disturbed by the loss of a new lover.'—*Johnson*.

That shall bestow on him so sure a draught¹³,
That he shall soon keep Tybalt company :
And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied.

Jul. Indeed, I never shall be satisfied
With Romeo, till I behold him—dead—
Is my poor heart so for a kinsman vex'd :—
Madam, if you could find out but a man
To bear a poison, I would temper it ;
That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,
Soon sleep in quiet.—O, how my heart abhors
To hear him nam'd,—and cannot come to him,—
To wreak the love I bore my cousin Tybalt
Upon his body that hath slaughter'd him !

La. Cap. Find thou the means, and I'll find such
a man.

But now I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

Jul. And joy comes well in such a needful time :
What are they, I beseech your ladyship ?

La. Cap. Well, well, thou hast a careful father,
child ;

One, who, to put thee from thy heaviness,
Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy,
That thou expect'st not, nor I look'd not for.

Jul. Madam, in happy time¹⁴, what day is that ?

La. Cap. Marry, my child, early next Thursday
morn,

The gallant, young, and noble gentleman,

¹³ Thus the first quarto. The subsequent quartos and the folio less intelligibly read :—

' Shall give him such an *unaccustom'd* dram.'

¹⁴ *A la bonne heure.* This phrase was interjected when the hearer was not so well pleased as the speaker.—*Johnson.* Bishop Lowth uses it in his Letter to Warburton, p. 101 :—' And may I not hope then for the honour of your lordship's animadversions? *In good time* : when the candid examiner understands Latin a little better ; and when your lordship has a competent knowledge of Hebrew.'

The county¹⁵ Paris, at Saint Peter's church,
Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

Jul. Now, by Saint Peter's church, and Peter too,
He shall not make me there a joyful bride.

I wonder at this haste ; that I must wed
Ere he, that should be husband, comes to woo.

I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam,
I will not marry yet ; and when I do, I swear,
It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate,
Rather than Paris :—These are news indeed !

La. Cap. Here comes your father ; tell him so
yourself,

And see how he will take it at your hands.

Enter CAPULET and Nurse.

Cap. When the sun sets, the air doth drizzle dew¹⁶ ;
But for the sunset of my brother's son,
It rains downright.—

¹⁵ *County*, or *countie*, was the usual term for an earl in Shakspeare's time. Paris is in this play first styled a *young earle*. So Baret, 'a *countie* or an *earle*, comes un comte,' and 'a *countie* or *earldome*, comitatus.' Fairfax very frequently uses the word. See vol. i. p. 319, note 25 ; vol. iii. p. 291, note 3.

¹⁶ Thus the quarto 1597. The quarto 1599, and the folio, read 'the earth doth *drizzle* dew,' which is philosophically true ; and so perhaps the poet wrote, for in *The Rape of Lucrece* he says :—

'But as the *earth* doth weep, the *sun* being set.'

Malone.

Steevens adds :—'When our author, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, says, "And when she [i. e. the moon] weeps, *weeps* every little flower," he only means that every little flower is moistened with dew, as if with tears ; and not that the flower itself *drizzles* dew. This passage sufficiently explains how the *earth*, in the quotation from *The Rape of Lucrece*, may be said to weep.' That Shakspeare thought it was the *air*, and not the *earth*, that *drizzled* dew, is evident from many passages in his works. So in *King John* :—

'Before the *dew* of evening *fall*.'

How now, a conduit¹⁷, girl? what, still in tears?
 Ever more showering? In one little body
 Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind:
 For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea,
 Do ebb and flow with tears; the bark thy body is
 Sailing in this salt flood; the winds, thy sighs;
 Who,—raging with thy tears, and they with them,—
 Without a sudden calm, will overset
 Thy tempest-tossed body.—How now, wife?
 Have you deliver'd to her our decree?

La. Cap. Ay, sir; but she will none, she give
 you thanks.

I would, the fool were married to her grave!

Cap. Soft, take me with you, take me with you
 wife.

How! will she none? doth she not give us thanks
 Is she not proud? doth she not count her bless'd,
 Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought
 So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

Jul. Not proud, you have; but thankful, that ye
 have;

Proud can I never be of what I hate;
 But thankful even for hate, that is meant love.

Cap. How now! how now, chop-logick¹⁸! What
 is this?

Proud,—and, I thank you,—and, I thank you not;—
 And yet not proud;—Mistress minion, you,
 Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no pouds,

¹⁷ The same image, which was in frequent use with Shakespeare's cotemporaries, occurs in the poem of *Romeus and Juliet* more than once:—

‘His sighs are stopt, and stopped in the *conduit* of his tears.

¹⁸ Capulet, as Steevens observes, uses this as a nickname. The hyphen is wanting in the old copy. ‘Choplogyk is he that whan his mayster rebuketh his servaunt for his defawtes, he will give him xx wordes for one, or elles he will bydde the devyll paternoster in scylence.’—*The xxxiii Orders of Knaves*, blk. l.

But settle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next,
To go with Paris to Saint Peter's church,
Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.
Out, you green sickness carrion! out, you baggage!
You tallow face¹⁹!

La. Cap. Fye, fye! what, are you mad?

Jul. Good father, I beseech you on my knees,
Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

Cap. Hang thee, young baggage! disobedient
wretch!

I tell thee what,—get thee to church o' Thursday,
Or never after look me in the face:
Speak not, reply not, do not answer me:
My fingers itch.—Wife, we scarce thought us bless'd,
That God had sent us but this only child;
But now I see this one is one too much,
And that we have a curse in having her:
Out on her, hilding²⁰!

Nurse. God in heaven bless her!—
You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so.

Cap. And why, my lady wisdom? hold your
tongue,
Good prudence; smatter with your gossips, go.

Nurse. I speak no treason.

Cap. O, God ye good den!

Nurse. May not one speak?

Cap. Peace, you mumbling fool!

¹⁹ Such was the indelicacy of the age of Shakspeare, that authors were not contented only to employ these terms of abuse in their own original performances, but even felt no reluctance to introduce them in their versions of the most chaste and elegant of the Greek or Roman poets. Stanyhurst, the translator of Virgil, in 1582, makes Dido call Æneas *hedge-brat*, *cullion*, and *tar-breech*, in the course of one speech. Nay, in the Interlude of The Repentance of Mary Magdalene, 1567, she says to one of her attendants:—

'Horeson, I beshrewe your heart, are you here?'

²⁰ Base woman.

Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl,
For here we need it not.

La. Cap.

You are too hot.

Cap. God's bread! it makes me mad; Day, night,
late, early,

At home, abroad, alone, in company,
Waking, or sleeping, still my care hath been
To have her match'd: and having now provided
A gentleman of princely parentage,
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly train'd,
Stuff'd (as they say,) with honourable parts,
Proportion'd as one's heart could wish a man,—
And then to have a wretched puling fool,
A whining mammet, in her fortune's tender,
To answer—*I'll not wed,—I cannot love*²¹,
I am too young,—I pray you, pardon me;—
But, an you will not wed, I'll pardon you:
Graze where you will, you shall not house with me;
Look to't, think on't, I do not use to jest.
Thursday is near; lay hand on heart, advise:
An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend;
An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die i'the streets,
For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,
Nor what is mine shall never do thee good:
Trust to't, bethink you, I'll not be forsworn. [*Exit.*

Jul. Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,
That sees into the bottom of my grief?
O, sweet my mother, cast me not away!
Delay this marriage for a month, a week;
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

²¹ There is a passage in the old play of *Wily Beguiled*, pointed out by Malone, so nearly resembling this, that one poet must have copied from the other. *Wily Beguiled* was on the stage before 1596, being mentioned by Nashe in his *Have with You to Saffron Walden*, printed in that year.

'A whining *mammet*,' in the preceding line, confirms the explanation of *mammets* given in vol. v. p. 161, note 13.

La. Cap. Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word;
Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee. [*Exit.*

Jul. O God!—O nurse! how shall this be prevented?

My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven;
How shall that faith return again to earth,
Unless that husband send it me from heaven
By leaving earth?—comfort me, counsel me.—
Alack, alack, that heaven should practise stratagems
Upon so soft a subject as myself?—
What say'st thou? hast thou not a word of joy?
Some comfort, nurse.

Nurse. 'Faith, here 'tis: Romeo
Is banished; and all the world to nothing,
That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you;
Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.
Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,
I think it best you married with the county.
O, he's a lovely gentleman²²!
Romeo's a dishclout to him; an eagle, madam,
Hath not so green²³, so quick, so fair an eye,

²² The character of the Nurse exhibits a just picture of those whose actions have no principles for their foundation. She has been unfaithful to the trust reposed in her by Capulet, and is ready to embrace any expedient that offers, to avert the consequences of her first infidelity. The picture is not, however, an original, the nurse in the poem exhibits the same readiness to accommodate herself to the present conjuncture. Sir John Vanbrugh, in *The Relapse*, has copied, in this respect, the character of his nurse from Shakspeare.

²³ Perhaps Chaucer has given to Emetrius, in *The Knight's Tale*, eyes of the same colour:—

'His nose was high, his eyin bright *citryn*.'

i. e. of the hue of an unripe lemon or citron. Again in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, by Fletcher and Shakspeare:—

'——— oh vouchsafe

'With that thy rare *green* eye,' &c.

Arthur Hall (the most ignorant and absurd of all the translators of Homer) in the fourth *Iliad* (4to. 1581), calls Minerva—

'The *greene* eide goddesse.'

The early French poets have frequent mention of *yeux vers*,

As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,
 I think you are happy in this second match,
 For it excels your first: or if it did not,
 Your first is dead: or 'twere as good he were,
 As living here, and you no use of him.

Jul. Speakest thou from thy heart?

Nurse. From my soul too;
 Or else beshrew them both.

Jul. Amen!

Nurse. To what?

Jul. Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous
 much.

Go in; and tell my lady I am gone,
 Having displeas'd my father, to Laurence' cell,
 To make confession, and to be absolv'd.

Nurse. Marry, I will; and this is wisely done.

[*Exit.*]

Jul. Ancient damnation! O most wicked fiend!
 Is it more sin—to wish me thus forsworn,
 Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue
 Which she hath prais'd him with above compare
 So many thousand times?—Go, counsellor;
 Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.—
 I'll to the friar, to know his remedy;
 If all else fail, myself have power to die. [*Exit.*]

which Le Grand has in vain attempted to convert into *yeux
 vairs*, or gray eyes. Plautus alludes to *green eyes* in his *Cur-
 culio* :—

‘ Qui hic est homo

Cum collativo ventre atque oculis *herbeis*.’

And Lord Verulam says, ‘ Great eyes, with a *green circle* be-
 tween the white and the white of the eye signify long life.’—
Hist. of Life and Death, p. 124. Villareal, a Portuguese, has
 written a treatise in praise of *green eyes*, and they are even said
 to exist now among his countrymen. See Pinkerton's *Geo-
 graphy*, vol. i. p. 556.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. Friar Laurence's Cell.

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE *and* PARIS.

Fri. On Thursday, sir? the time is very short.

Par. My father Capulet will have it so;
And I am nothing slow, to slack his haste¹.

Fri. You say, you do not know the lady's mind;
Uneven is the course, I like it not.

Par. Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,
And therefore have I little talk'd of love;
For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.
Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous,
That she doth give her sorrow so much sway;
And, in his wisdom, hastes our marriage,
To stop the inundation of her tears;
Which, too much minded by herself alone,
May be put from her by society:
Now do you know the reason of this haste.

Fri. I would, I knew not why it should be slow'd².

[*Aside.*

Look, sir, here comes the lady towards my cell.

¹ The meaning of Paris is clear, he does not wish to restrain Capulet, or to delay his own marriage; *there is nothing of slowness in me, to induce me to slacken or abate his haste*: but the words the poet has given him import the reverse, and seem rather to mean *I am not backward in restraining his haste*. I endeavour to retard him as much as I can. The poet has hastily fallen into similar inadvertencies elsewhere. In the first edition the line ran:—

‘And I am nothing *slack* to slow his haste.’

² To *slow* and to *foreslow* were anciently in common use as verbs:—

‘—— will you o'erflow

The fields, thereby my march to *slow*.’

Enter JULIET.

Par. Happily met, my lady, and my wife!

Jul. That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.

Par. That may be, must be, love, on Thursday next.

Jul. What must be shall be.

Fri. That's a certain text.

Par. Come you to make confession to this father?

Jul. To answer that, were to confess to you.

Par. Do not deny to him, that you love me.

Jul. I will confess to you, that I love him.

Par. So will you, I am sure, that you love me.

Jul. If I do so, it will be of more price,
Being spoke behind your back, than to your face.

Par. Poor soul, thy face is much abus'd with tears.

Jul. The tears have got small victory by that;
For it was bad enough before their spite.

Par. Thou wrong'st it, more than tears, with
that report.

Jul. That is no slander, sir, that is a truth;
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

Par. Thy face is mine, and thou hast slander'd it.

Jul. It may be so, for it is not mine own.—
Are you at leisure, holy father, now;
Or shall I come to you at evening mass³?

Fri. My leisure serves me, pensive daughter
now :—

My lord, we must entreat the time alone.

Par. God shield, I should disturb devotion :—
Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse you :
Till then, adieu ! and keep this holy kiss.

[*Exit PARIS*

³ Juliet means *vespers*, there is no such thing as *evening mass*. *Masses* (as Fynes Moryson observes) are only sung in the morning, and when the priests are fasting.

Jul. O, shut the door! and when thou hast done so,
Come weep with me; Past hope, past cure, past help!

Fri. Ah, Juliet, I already know thy grief;
It strains me past the compass of my wits:
I hear thou must, and nothing must prorogue it,
On Thursday next be married to this county.

Jul. Tell me not, Friar, that thou hear'st of this,
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it:
If, in thy wisdom, thou canst give no help,
Do thou but call my resolution wise,
And with this knife I'll help it presently.
God join'd my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands;
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo seal'd,
Shall be the label to another deed⁴,
Or my true heart with treacherous revolt
Turn to another, this shall slay them both:
Therefore, out of thy long-experienc'd time,
Give me some present counsel; or, behold
Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife
Shall play the umpire⁵; arbitrating that
Which the commission⁶ of thy years and art
Could to no issue of true honour bring.
Be not so long to speak; I long to die,
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

Fri. Hold, daughter; I do spy a kind of hope,
Which craves as desperate an execution
As that is desperate which we would prevent.
If, rather than to marry county Paris,
Thou hadst the strength of will to slay thyself;
Then is it likely, thou wilt undertake

⁴ The seals of deeds formerly were appended on distinct slips or labels affixed to the deed. Hence in King Richard II. the Duke of York discovers a covenant which his son the Duke of Anmerle had entered into by the depending seal.

⁵ i. e. shall decide the struggle between me and my distress.

⁶ *Commission* may be here used for *authority*: but it is more probable that *commixtion* is the word intended.

A thing like death to chide away this shame,
That cop'st with death himself to scape from it;
And, if thou dar'st, I'll give thee remedy.

Jul. O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,
From off the battlements of yonder tower;
Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk
Where serpents are; chain me with roaring bears;
Or shut me nightly⁷ in a charnel-house,
O'er cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,
With reeky shanks, and yellow chapless-sculls;
Or bid me go into a new made grave,
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud;
Things that, to hear them told, have made me
tremble;

And I will do it without fear or doubt,
To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love⁸.

Fri. Hold, then; go home, be merry, give consent
To marry Paris: Wednesday is to-morrow;
To-morrow night look that thou lie alone,
Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber:
Take thou this phial, being then in bed,
And this distilled liquor drink thou off;
When presently, through all thy veins shall run
A cold and drowsy humour, which shall seize
Each vital spirit; for no pulse shall keep
His natural progress, but surcease to beat:
No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou liv'st;
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade

⁷ The quarto 1597 reads—

‘ Or chain me to some steepy mountain's top,
Where roaring bears and savage lions roam.’

In the text the 4to of 1599 is followed, except that it has ‘ or
hide me nightly.’

⁸ Thus the 4to 1599 and the folio: the 4to 1597 reads, I
think, with more spirit:—

‘ To keep myself a faithful unstain'd wife
To my dear lord, my dearest Romeo.’

Boswell.

To paly ashes; thy eyes' windows fall,
 Like death, when he shuts up the day of life;
 Each part depriv'd of supple government,
 Shall, stiff, and stark, and cold, appear like death:
 And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death
 Thou shalt remain full two and forty hours⁹,
 And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.
 Now when the bridegroom in the morning comes
 To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead:
 Then (as the manner of our country is)
 In thy best robes uncover'd on the bier¹⁰,
 Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault,
 Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.
 In the mean time, against thou shalt awake,
 Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift;
 And hither shall he come; and he and I
 Will watch thy waking, and that very night
 Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.
 And this shall free thee from this present shame;
 If no unconstant toy¹¹, nor womanish fear,
 Abate thy valour in the acting it.

Jul. Give me, give me! O tell me not of fear.

⁹ Instead of the remainder of this scene the 4to 1597 has only these four lines:—

‘And when thou art laid in thy kindred's vault,
 I'll send in haste to Mantua to thy lord;
 And he shall come and take thee from thy grave.

Jul. Friar, I go; be sure thou send for my dear Romeo.’

¹⁰ The Italian custom here alluded to, of carrying the dead body to the grave richly dressed, and with the face *uncovered* (which is not mentioned by Painter), Shakspeare found particularly described in the *The Tragicall Hystory of Romeus and Juliet*:—

‘Another use there is, that whosoever dies,
 Borne to the church, *with open face upon the bier he lies,*
In wonted weed attir'd, not wrapt in winding sheet.’

Thus also Ophelia's song in *Hamlet*:—

‘They bore him *bare-faced on the bier.*’

¹¹ If no *fickle freak*, no *light caprice*, no *change of fancy*, hinder the performance. The expressions are from the poem.

Fri. Hold; get you gone, be strong and prosperous

In this resolve: I'll send a friar with speed
To Mantua, with my letters to thy lord.

Jul. Love, give me strength! and strength shall
help afford.

Farewell, dear father!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Room in Capulet's House.*

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, Nurse, and
Servant.

Cap. So many guests invite as here are writ.—

[*Exit* Servant.

Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks¹.

2 Serv. You shall have none ill, sir; for I'll try
if they can lick their fingers².

Cap. How canst thou try them so?

2 Serv. Marry, sir, 'tis an ill cook that cannot
lick his own fingers: therefore he, that cannot lick
his fingers, goes not with me.

Cap. Go, begone.—

[*Exit* Servant.

We shall be much unfurnish'd for this time.—

What, is my daughter gone to friar Laurence?

Nurse. Ay, forsooth.

Cap. Well, he may chance to do some good on her:
A peevish self-will'd harlotry it is.

¹ Capulet has in a former scene said:—

' ——— We'll keep no great ado:—

—— we'll have some half a dozen friends.'

The poet has made him alter his mind strangely, or had forgotten what he had made him say before. (See Act iii. Sc. iv.) Malone observes that the former scene was of the poet's own invention, and that he here recollected the poem:—

' ——— he myndes to make for him a *costly feast*.'

² This adage is found in Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie*, 1589:—

' As the olde cocke crowes so doeth the chicke:
A bad cooke that cannot his owne fingers lick.'

Enter JULIET.

Nurse. See, where she comes from shrift³ with merry look.

Cap. How now, my headstrong? where have you been gadding?

Jul. Where I have learn'd me to repent the sin
Of disobedient opposition

To you, and your behests; and am enjoin'd
By holy Laurence to fall prostrate here,
And beg your pardon:—Pardon, I beseech you!
Henceforward I am ever rul'd by you.

Cap. Send for the county: go tell him of this;
I'll have this knot knit up to-morrow morning.

Jul. I met the youthful lord at Laurence's cell;
And gave him what becomed⁴ love I might,
Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

Cap. Why, I am glad on't; this is well,—stand up:
This is as't should be.—Let me see the county;
Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.—
Now, afore God, this reverend holy friar,
All our whole city is much bound to him⁵.

Jul. Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,
To help me sort such needful ornaments
As you think fit to furnish me to-morrow?

La. Cap. No, not till Thursday; there is time
enough.

Cap. Go, nurse, go with her:—we'll to church to-morrow. *[Exeunt JULIET and Nurse.]*

La. Cap. We shall be short in our provision;
'Tis now near night.

³ i. e. confession.

⁴ *Becomed* for *becoming*: one participle for another, a frequent practice with Shakspeare.

⁵ Thus the folio and the quartos 1599 and 1609: The oldest quarto reads perhaps more grammatically:—

'All our whole city is much bound unto.'

Cap. Tush! I will stir about,
And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife:
Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her;
I'll not to bed to-night;—let me alone;
I'll play the housewife for this once.—What, ho!
They are all forth: Well, I will walk myself
To county Paris, to prepare him up
Against to-morrow: my heart is wondrous light,
Since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. Juliet's Chamber.

Enter JULIET and Nurse.

Jul. Ay, those attires are best:—But, gentle nurse,
I pray thee, leave me to myself to-night;
For I have need of many orisons
To move the heavens to smile upon my state.
Which, well thou know'st, is cross and full of sin.

Enter LADY CAPULET.

La. Cap. What, are you busy? do you need my
help?

Jul. No, madam; we have cull'd such necessities
As are behoveful for our state to-morrow;
So please you, let me now be left alone,
And let the nurse this night sit up with you;
For, I am sure, you have your hands full all,
In this so sudden business.

La. Cap. Good night!
Get thee to bed, and rest; for thou hast need.

[*Exeunt LADY CAPULET and Nurse.*]

Jul. Farewell¹!—God knows, when we shall
meet again.

¹ This speech received considerable additions after the first copy was published.

I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,
That almost freezes up the heat of life :

I'll call them back again to comfort me :—

Nurse !—What should she do here ?

My dismal scene I needs must act alone.—

Come, phial.—

What if this mixture do not work at all ?

Must I of force be married to the county ?—

No, no ;—this shall forbid it :—lie thou there.—

[*Laying down a Dagger*².

What if it be a poison, which the friar

Subtly hath minister'd to have me dead ;

Lest in this marriage he should be dishonour'd,

Because he married me before to Romeo ?

I fear, it is : and yet, methinks, it should not,

For he hath still been tried a holy man :

I will not entertain so bad a thought.—

How if, when I am laid into the tomb,

I wake before the time that Romeo

Come to redeem me ? there's a fearful point !

Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,

To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,

And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes ?

Or, if I live, is it not very like,

The horrible conceit of death and night,

Together with the terror of the place, —

As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,

Where, for these many hundred years, the bones

Of all my buried ancestors are pack'd³;

² This stage direction has been supplied by the modern editors. The quarto of 1597 reads :—' *Knife*, lie thou there.'

' *Daggers*, or, as they were more commonly called, *knives* (says Mr. Gifford), were worn at all times by every woman in England; whether they were so worn in Italy, Shakspeare, I believe, never inquired, and I cannot tell.'—*Works of Ben Jonson*, vol. v. p. 221.

³ This idea was probably suggested to the poet by his native

Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,
 Lies fest'ring⁴ in his shroud; where, as they say,
 At some hours in the night spirits resort;—
 Alack, alack! is it not like, that I,
 So early waking,—what with loathsome smells,
 And shrieks like mandrakes torn out of the earth,
 That living mortals, hearing them, run mad⁵;—
 O! if I wake, shall I not be distraught⁶,
 Environed with all these hideous fears?
 And madly play with my forefathers' joints?
 And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud?
 And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,
 As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?
 O, look! methinks, I see my cousin's ghost
 Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body
 Upon a rapier's point:—Stay, Tybalt, stay!—
 Romeo, I come! this do I drink to thee.

[*She throws herself on the Bed.*]

SCENE IV. Capulet's Hall.

Enter LADY CAPULET *and* Nurse.

La. Cap. Hold, take these keys, and fetch more
 spices, nurse.

place. The charnel at Stratford-upon-Avon is a very large one, and perhaps contains a greater number of bones than are to be found in any other repository of the same kind in England.

⁴ To *fester* is to corrupt. So in King Edward III. 1599:—

‘Lillies that *fester* smell far worse than weeds.’

This line also occurs in the ninety-fourth Sonnet of Shakspeare. The play of Edward III. has been ascribed to him.

⁵ See vol v. p. 263; and vol. vi. p. 204. The *mandrake* (says Thomas Newton in his Herbal) has been idly represented as ‘a creature having life, and engendered under the earth of the seed of some dead person that hath beene convicted and put to death for some felonie or murther, and that they had the same in such dampish and funerall places where the saide convicted persons were buried,’ &c. So in Webster's Duchess of Malfy, 1623:—

‘I have this night digg'd up a *mandrake*,
 And am grown mad with it.’

⁶ i. e. distracted.

Nurse. They call for dates and quinces in the pastry¹.
[*Exit Nurse.*]

Enter CAPULET.

Cap. Come, stir, stir, stir! the second cock hath crow'd,
The curfew bell hath rung, 'tis three o'clock:—
Look to the bak'd meats, good Angelica:
Spare not for cost.

La. Cap. Go, go, you cot-quean, go,
Get you to bed; 'faith, you'll be sick to-morrow
For this night's watching².

Cap. No, not a whit; What! I have watch'd ere
now
All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

La. Cap. Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt³ in
your time;
But I will watch you from such watching now.

[*Exit LADY CAPULET.*]

Cap. A jealous-hood, a jealous-hood!—Now,
fellow,
What's there? -

Enter Servants, with Spits, Logs, and Baskets.

1 Serv. Things for the cook, sir; but I know not
what.

Cap. Make haste, make haste. [*Exit 1 Serv.*]—
Sirrah, fetch drier logs;
Call Peter, he will show thee where they are.

¹ The room where the pastry was made.

² This speech, which in the old copies is attributed to the Nurse, should surely be given to Lady Capulet. The Nurse would hardly call her lordly master a *cot-queen*, or reply to a speech addressed to her mistress. Beside that, she had been sent for spices, and is shortly after made to re-enter. I have therefore made the necessary change.

³ The animal called the *mouse-hunt* is the martin, which, being of the weasel tribe, prowls about in the night for its prey. 'Cat after kinde, good *mouse-hunt*,' is one of Heywood's proverbs.

2 Serv. I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,
And never trouble Peter for the matter. [*Exit.*

Cap. 'Mass, and well said; A merry whoreson! ha,
Thou shalt be logger-head.—Good faith, 'tis day:
The county will be here with musick straight.

[*Musick within.*

For so he said he would. I hear him near:—
Nurse!—Wife!—what ho;—what, nurse, I say!

Enter Nurse.

Go, waken Juliet, go, and trim her up;
I'll go and chat with Paris:—Hie, make haste,
Make haste! the bridegroom he is come already:
Make haste, I say! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Juliet's Chamber; JULIET on the Bed.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Mistress!—what, mistress!—Juliet!—
fast, I warrant her, she:—
Why, lamb! why, lady;—fye, you slug-a-bed!—
Why, love, I say!—madam! sweet-heart!—why,
bride!
What, not a word?—you take your pennyworths
now;
Sleep for a week; for the next night, I warrant,
The county Paris hath set up his rest¹,
That you shall rest but little.—God forgive me,
(Marry and amen!) how sound is she asleep!

¹ Nashe, in his *Terrors of the Night*, quibbles in the same manner on this expression:—'You that are married and have wives of your owne, and yet hold too nere friendship with your neighbours, *set up your rests*, that the night will be an ill neighbour to *your rest*, and that you shall have as little peace of minde as the rest.' The phrase is explained in vol. iii. p. 249.

I needs must wake her:—Madam, madam, madam!
Ay, let the county take you in your bed;
He'll fright you up, i'faith.—Will it not be?
What, drest! and in your clothes! and down again!
I must needs wake you: Lady! lady! lady!
Alas! alas!—Help! help! my lady's dead!—
O, well-a-day, that ever I was born!—
Some aqua-vitæ, ho!—my lord! my lady!

Enter LADY CAPULET.

La. Cap. What noise is here?

Nurse. O lamentable day!

La. Cap. What is the matter? .

Nurse. Look, look! O heavy day!

La. Cap. O me, O me!—my child, my only life,
Revive, look up, or I will die with thee!—
Help, help!—call help.

Enter CAPULET.

Cap. For shame, bring Juliet forth; her lord is come.

Nurse. She's dead, deceas'd, she's dead; alack
the day!

La. Cap. Alack the day! she's dead, she's dead,
she's dead.

Cap. Ha! let me see her:—Out, alas! she's cold;
Her blood is settled; and her joints are stiff;
Life and these lips have long been separated:
Death lies on her, like an untimely frost
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.
Accursed time! unfortunate old man!

Nurse. O lamentable day!

La. Cap. O woful time!

Cap. Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make
me wail,

Ties up my tongue, and will not let me speak².

² Shakspeare has here followed the old poem closely, without recollecting that he had made Capulet in this scene clamorous

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE *and* PARIS, *with*
Musicians.

Fri. Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

Cap. Ready to go, but never to return:

O son, the night before thy wedding-day
Hath death lain with thy bride³:—See, there she lies,
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.

Death is my son-in-law, death is my heir;
My daughter he hath wedded! I will die,
And leave him all; life leaving, all is death's.

Par. Have I thought long to see this morning's
face⁴,

And doth it give me such a sight as this?

La. Cap. Accurs'd, unhappy, wretched, hateful
day!

in his grief. In the poem Juliet's mother makes a long speech,
but the old man utters not a word.

' But more than all the rest the father's heart was so
Smit with the heavy news, and so shut up with sudden woe,
That he no had the power his daughter to beweepe,
No yet to speak, but long is foro'd his tears and plaints to
keep.'

³ Euripides has sported with this thought in the same man-
ner. Iphig. in Aulid. v. 460:—

‘ Τήνδ' αὖ τάλαιναν παρθενον (τί παρθενον;
“ Ἀδης νιν, ὡς ἔοικε, νυμφεύσει τάχα).’

Decker, in his Satiromastix, has the same thought more coarsely
expressed:—

‘ Dead: she's death's bride; he hath her maidenhead.’

He has the same thought in his Wonderful Year:—‘ Death
rudely lay with her, and spoiled her of her maidenhead in spite
of her husband.

⁴ The quarto of 1597 continues the speech of Paris thus:—

‘ And doth it now present such prodigies?

Accurst, unhappy, miserable man,

Forlorn, forsaken, destitute I am;

Born to the world to be a slave in it:

Distrest, remediless, unfortunate.

Oh heavens! Oh nature! wherefore did you make me

To live so vile, so wretched as I shall?

In the text the edition of 1599 is here followed. The Nurse's
exclamatory speech is not in the first quarto.

Most miserable hour, that e'er time saw
In lasting labour of his pilgrimage!
But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,
But one thing to rejoice and solace in,
And cruel death hath catch'd it from my sight.

Nurse. O woe! O woful, woful, woful day!
Most lamentable day! most woful day,
That ever, ever, I did yet behold!
O day! O day! O day! O hateful day!
Never was seen so black a day as this:
O woful day, O woful day!

Par. Beguil'd, divorced, wronged, spited, slain,
Most détestable death, by thee beguil'd,
By cruel cruel thee quite overthrown!—
O love! O life!—not life, but love in death!

Cap. Despis'd, distressed, hated, martyr'd,
kill'd!—

Uncomfortable time! why cam'st thou now
To murder murder our solemnity?—
O child! O child!—my soul, and not my child!—
Dead art thou, dead!—alack! my child is dead;
And, with my child, my joys are buried!

Fri. Peace, ho, for shame! confusion's cure
lives not

In these confusions. Heaven and yourself
Had part in this fair maid; now heaven hath all,
And all the better is it for the maid:
Your part in her you could not keep from death;
But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.
The most you sought was—her promotion;
For 'twas your heaven, she should be advanc'd:
And weep ye now, seeing she is advanc'd,
Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?
O, in this love, you love your child so ill,
That you run mad, seeing that she is well:
She's not well married, that lives married long;

But she's best married, that dies married young.
 Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary
 On this fair corse; and, as the custom is,
 In all her best array bear her to church:
 For though fond nature bids us all lament,
 Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

Cap. All things, that we ordained festival⁵,
 Turn from their office to black funeral;
 Our instruments, to melancholy bells;
 Our wedding cheer, to a sad burial feast⁶;
 Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change;
 Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,
 And all things change them to the contrary.

Fri. Sir, go you in,—and, madam, go with him;—
 And go, sir Paris;—every one prepare
 To follow this fair corse unto her grave:
 The heavens do lour upon you, for some ill;
 Move them no more, by crossing their high will.

[*Exeunt* CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, PARIS,
 and Friar.

1 *Mus.* 'Faith, we may put up our pipes, and be gone.

Nurse. Honest good fellows, ah, put up; put up:
 For, well you know, this is a pitiful case.

[*Exit Nurse.*

1 *Mus.* Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

Enter PETER⁷.

Pet. Musicians, O, musicians, *Heart's ease, heart's*

⁵ Instead of this and the following speeches the first quarto has only a couplet:—

'Let it be so; come, woeful sorrow-mates,
 Let us together taste this bitter fate.'

The enlarged text is formed upon the poem.

⁶ See Hamlet, Act i. Sc. 2.

⁷ From the quarto of 1599 it appears that the part of Peter was originally performed by William Kempe.

ease; O, an you will have me live, play—*heart's ease*.

1 *Mus.* Why *heart's ease*?

Pet. O, musicians, because my heart itself plays — *My heart is full of woe*⁸. O, play me some merry dump⁹, to comfort me.

2 *Mus.* Not a dump we; 'tis no time to play now.

Pet. You will not then?

Mus. No.

Pet. I will then give it you soundly.

1 *Mus.* What will you give us?

Pet. No money, on my faith; but the gleek¹⁰: I will give you the minstrel.

1 *Mus.* Then will I give you the serving-creature.

Pet. Then will I lay the serving-creature's dagger on your pate. I will carry no crotchets: I'll *re* you, I'll *fa* you; Do you note me?

1 *Mus.* An you *re* us, and *fa* us, you note us.

2 *Mus.* 'Pray you, put up your dagger, and put out your wit.

⁸ This is the burthen of the first stanza of 'A Pleasant New Ballad of Two Lovers:—

'Hey hoe! my heart is full of woe.'

⁹ A *dump* was formerly the received term for a grave or melancholy strain in music, vocal or instrumental. It also signified a kind of poetical elegy. See vol. i. p. 152. A *merry dump* is no doubt a purposed absurdity put into the mouth of Master Peter. That it was a sad or dismal strain, perhaps sometimes for the sake of contrast and effect mixed up with livelier airs, appears from Cavendish's Metrical Visions, p. 17:—

'What is now left to helpe me in this case?

Nothing at all but *dompe in the dance*,

Among deade men to tryppe on the trace.'

The music of a dump of the sixteenth century is given in a note on the Two Gentlemen of Verona in the variorum editions of Shakspeare.

¹⁰ A pun is here intended. A *gleekman*, or *gligman*, is a *minstrel*. To give the *gleek* meant also to pass a jest upon a person, to make him appear ridiculous; a *gleek* being a *jest* or *scoff*; from the Saxon *glig*.

Pet. Then have at you with my wit; I will dry-beat you with an iron wit, and put up my iron dagger:—Answer me like men¹¹:

*When griping grief the heart doth wound,
And doleful dumps the mind oppress,
Then musick with her silver sound*¹²—

Why, *silver sound*? why, *musick with her silver sound*?

What say you, Simon Catling¹³?

1 *Mus.* Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

Pet. Pretty! What say you, Hugh Rebeck?

2 *Mus.* I say—*silver sound*, because musicians sound for silver.

Pet. Pretty too!—What say you, James Soundpost?

3 *Mus.* 'Faith, I know not what to say.

Pet. O, I cry you mercy! you are the singer: I will say for you. It is—*musick with her silver sound*, because such fellows as you have seldom gold for sounding:—

*Then musick with her silver sound,
With speedy help doth lend redress.*

[*Exit, singing.*

1 *Mus.* What a pestilent knave is this same?

2 *Mus.* Hang him, Jack! Come, we'll in here; tarry for the mourners, and stay dinner. [*Exeunt.*

¹¹ 'Dr. Percy thinks that the questions of Peter are designed as a ridicule on the forced and unnatural explanations given by us painful editors of ancient authors.'—*Steevens.* ●

¹² This is part of a song by Richard Edwards, to be found in the *Paradice of Dainty Devices*, fol. 31, b. Another copy of this song is to be found in Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*.

¹³ This worthy takes his name from a small lutestring made of catgut. His companion the fiddler from an instrument of the same name mentioned by many of our old writers, and recorded by Milton as an instrument of mirth:—

'When the merry bells ring round,
And the joyful *rebecks* sound.'

ACT V.

SCENE I. Mantua. *A Street.*

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. If I may trust the flattering eye of sleep¹,
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand :
My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne ;
And, all this day, an unaccustom'd spirit
Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts².
I dreamt, my lady came and found me dead
(Strange dream! that gives a dead man leave to
think);

And breath'd such life with kisses in my lips³,
That I reviv'd, and was an emperor.
Ah me! how sweet is love itself possess'd,
When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!

¹ Thus the first quarto. The folio reads:—

‘ If I may trust the flattering *truth* of sleep.’

The sense appears to be, If I may repose any confidence in the
flattering visions of the night. Otway reads:—

‘ If I may trust the flattery of sleep,

My dreams presage some joyful news at hand.’

² ‘ These three last lines are very gay and pleasing. But
why does Shakspeare give Romeo this involuntary cheerfulness
just before the extremity of unhappiness? Perhaps to show the
vanity of trusting to those uncertain and casual exaltations or
depressions, which many consider as certain foretokens of good
and evil.’—*Johnson*.

The poet has explained this passage a little further on:—

‘ How oft, when men are at the point of death,
Have they been merry? which their keepers call
A lightning before death.’

³ Shakspeare seems to have remembered Marlowe's *Hero*
and *Leander*, a poem that he has quoted in *As You Like It*:—

‘ By this sad Hero——

Viewing Leander's face, fell down and fainted;
He kiss'd her, and breath'd life into her lips, &c.

Enter BALTHASAR.

News from Verona!—How now, Balthasar?
Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?
How doth my lady? Is my father well?
How fares my Juliet? That I ask again;
For nothing can be ill, if she be well.

Bal. Then she is well, and nothing can be ill;
Her body sleeps in Capels' monument⁴,
And her immortal part with angels lives;
I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault,
And presently took post to tell it you;
O pardon me for bringing these ill news,
Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

Rom. Is it even so? then I defy you, stars!—
Thou know'st my lodging: get me ink and paper,
And hire post-horses; I will hence to-night.

Bal. Pardon me, sir, I will not leave you thus:
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import
Some misadventure.

Rom. Tush, thou art deceiv'd;
Leave me, and do the thing I bid thee do:.
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

Bal. No, my good lord.

Rom. No matter: get thee gone
And hire those horses; I'll be with thee straight.

[*Exit* BALTHASAR]

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night.
Let's see for means:—O, mischief! thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!
I do remember an apothecary,—
And hereabouts he dwells,—whom late I noted
In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows,
Culling of simples; meagre were his looks,

⁴ Shakspeare found *Capel* and *Capulet* used indiscriminately in the poem which was the groundwork of this tragedy.

Sharp misery had worn him to the bones⁵:
 And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,
 An alligator stuff'd, and other skins⁶
 Of ill shap'd fishes; and about his shelves
 A beggarly account of empty boxes,
 Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds,
 Remnants of packthread, and old cakes of roses,
 Were thinly scatter'd, to make up a show.
 Noting this penury, to myself I said—
 And if a man did need a poison now,
 Whose sale is present death in Mantua,
 Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.
 O, this same thought did but forerun my need;
 And this same needy man must sell it me.
 As I remember, this should be the house;
 Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut,—
 What, ho! apothecary!

Enter Apothecary.

Ap. Who calls so loud?

Rom. Come hither, man.—I see, that thou art poor;
 Hold, there is forty ducats; let me have

⁵ See Sackville's description of misery in the Induction to the *Mirror of Magistrates*:—

'His face was leane and some deal pinde away,
 And eke his hands consumed to the bones.'

⁶ We learn from Nashe's *Have with You to Saffron Walden*, 1596, that a stuffed aligator then made part of the furniture of an apothecary's shop:—'He made an anatomie of a rat, and after hanged her over his head, instead of an *apothecary's crocodile* or *dried alligator*.' Steevens was informed that formerly when an apothecary first engaged with his druggist, he was gratuitously furnished by him with these articles of show, which were then imported for that use only; and had met with the alligator, tortoise, &c. hanging up in the shop of an ancient apothecary at Limehouse, as well as in places more remote from the metropolis. See Hogarth's *Marriage à la Mode*, plate iii. It seems that the apothecaries dismissed their alligators, &c. sometime before the physicians parted with their amber-headed canes and solemn periwigs.

A dram of poison; such soon-speeding geer
 As will disperse itself through all the veins,
 That the life-weary taker may fall dead;
 And that the trunk may be discharg'd of breath
 As violently, as hasty powder fir'd
 Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

Ap. Such mortal drugs I have; but Mantua's law
 Is death, to any he that utters them.

Rom. Art thou so bare, and full of wretchedness,
 And fear'st to die? famine is in thy cheeks,
 Need and oppression stareth in thy eyes⁷,
 Upon thy back hangs ragged misery,
 The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law:
 The world affords no law to make thee rich;
 Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.

Ap. My poverty, but not my will, consents.

Rom. I pay thy poverty, and not thy will.

Ap. Put this in any liquid thing you will,
 And drink it off; and, if you had the strength
 Of twenty men, it would despatch you straight⁸.

⁷ The quarto of 1597 reads:—

‘ Upon thy back hangs ragged miserie,
 And starved famine dwelleth in thy cheeks.’

The quartos of 1599 and 1609:—

Need and oppression *starveth* in thy eyes.’

Otway exhibited the line as it is in the text in his *Caius Marius*, and the alteration is so slight that it well merits adoption. Ritson has justly observed that *need* and *oppression* could not properly be said to *starve* in the eyes of the Apothecary, though they may be supposed to be manifest in his *haggard looks*. To avoid the grammatical error Pope reads:—

‘ Need and oppression *stare within* thy eyes.’

The later quartos and the folio read:—

‘ Contempt and beggary hang upon thy back.’

⁸ Steevens thinks that Shakspeare may have remembered the following passage in *The Pardoner's Tale* of Chaucer, v. 12794:

‘ The Potecary answered, thou shalt have
 A thing, as wisly God my soule save,
 In all this world thir n'is no creature,
 That ete or dronke hath of this confecture,

Rom. There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls,

Doing more murders in this loathsome world,
Than these poor compounds that thou may'st not sell:
I sell thee poison, thou hast sold me none.
Farewell; buy food, and get thyself in flesh.—
Come, cordial, and not poison; go with me
To Juliet's grave, for there must I use thee.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. Friar Laurence's Cell.

Enter FRIAR JOHN.

John. Holy Franciscan friar! brother, ho!

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE.

Lau. This same should be the voice of Friar John.—

Welcome from Mantua; What says Romeo?
Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

John. Going to find a barefoot brother out,
One of our order to associate me¹,
Here in this city visiting the sick,
And finding him, the searchers of the town,
Suspecting that we both were in a house
Where the infectious pestilence did reign,

Not but the mountance of a corne of whete,
That he ne shall his lif anon forlete;
Ye, sterve he shall, and that in lesse while
Than thou wolt gon a pas not but a mile:
This poison is so strong and violent.'

¹ Each friar had always a companion assigned him by the superior, when he asked leave to go out. In the *Visitatio Notabilis de Seleborne*, a curious record printed in White's *Natural History of Selborne*, Wykeham enjoins the canons not to go abroad without leave from the prior, who is ordered on such occasions to assign the brother a companion, 'ne suspicio sini tra vel scandalum oriatur.' There is a similar regulation in th

Seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth;
So that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd.

Lau. Who bare my letter then to Romeo?

John. I could not send it,—here it is again,—
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,
So fearful were they of infection.

Lau. Unhappy fortune! by my brotherhood,
The letter was not nice², but full of charge,
Of dear import; and the neglecting it
May do much danger: Friar John, go hence;
Get me an iron crow, and bring it straight
Unto my cell.

John. Brother, I'll go and bring it thee. [*Exit.*]

Lau. Now must I to the monument alone;
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake³;
She will beshrew me much, that Romeo
Hath had no notice of these accidents:
But I will write again to Mantua,
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come:
Poor living corse, clos'd in a dead man's tomb!

[*Exit.*]

statutes of Trinity College, Cambridge. So in *The Tragicall Hystory of Romeus and Juliet*, 1562:—

'Apace our friar John to Mantua him bies,
And, for because in Italy it is a wonted guise
That friars in the town should seldom walk alone,
But of their convent aye *should be accompanied with one*
Of his profession, straight a house he findeth out,
In mind to take some friar with him to walk the town
about.'

Shakspeare, having occasion for Friar John, has departed from the poem, and supposed the pestilence to rage at Verona instead of Mantua.

² i. e. was not *wantonly* written on a *trivial* or *idle* matter, but on a subject of importance. See Act iii. Sc. 1, note 1.

³ Instead of this line and the concluding part of the speech, the first quarto reads only:—

'Lest that the lady should before I come
Be wak'd from sleep, I will hie
To free her from that tomb of miserie.'

SCENE III.

1 Church Yard: in it a Monument belonging to the Capulets.

Enter PARIS, and his Page, bearing Flowers and a Torch.

Par. Give me thy torch, boy : Hence, and stand aloof;—

Let me put it out, for I would not be seen.
Under yon yew-trees lay thee all along,
Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground;
I shall no foot upon the churchyard tread
(Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves),
That thou shalt hear it: whistle then to me,
As signal that thou hear'st something approach.
Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

Page. I am almost afraid to stand alone
Here in the churchyard; yet I will adventure.

[Retires.]

Par. Sweet flower, with flowers I strew thy
bridal bed:

Meet tomb, that in thy circuit dost contain
The perfect model of eternity;
Fair Juliet, that with angels dost remain¹,
Except this latest favour at my hands;
That living honour'd thee, and, being dead,
With funeral praises do adorn thy tomb!

[The Boy whistles.]

The folio has these lines:—

' Sweet flow'r, with flow'rs thy bridal bed I strew;

O woe! thy canopy is dust and stones,

Which with sweet water I will nightly dew;

Or, wanting that, with tears distill'd by moans:

The obsequies that I for thee will keep

Nightly shall be, to strew thy grave and weep.'

In the text the seven lines are printed as they appear in the quarto of 1597.

The boy gives warning, something doth approach.
 What cursed foot wanders this way to-night,
 To cross my obsequies, and true-love's rites?
 What, with a torch!—muffle me, night, a while².
 [Retires.]

*Enter ROMEO and BALTHASAR, with a Torch,
 Mattock, &c.*

Rom. Give me that mattock, and the wrenching
 iron.

Hold, take this letter; early in the morning
 See thou deliver it to my lord and father.
 Give me the light: Upon thy life I charge thee,
 Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,
 And do not interrupt me in my course.
 Why I descend into this bed of death,
 Is, partly, to behold my lady's face:
 But, chiefly, to take thence from her dead finger
 A precious ring; a ring that I must use
 In dear³ employment: therefore hence, be gone:—
 But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry
 In what I further shall intend to do,
 By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint,
 And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs:
 The time and my intents are savage-wild;
 More fierce, and more inexorable far,
 Than empty tigers, or the roaring sea.

² Thus in Drayton's *Polyolbion*:—

‘But suddenly the clouds which on the winds do fly
 Do *muffle* him again.’

The word was not deemed unpoetical by Milton; the Elder
 Brother in *Comus* uses it:—

‘*Unmuffle*, ye faint stars,’ &c.

A *muffler* was a part of female dress, described in vol. i. p. 261.

³ That is, in *action of importance*. The sense of the word *dear*
 has been explained in vol. i. p. 382. So Ben Jonson, in *Catiline*
 Act i.:—

‘Put your known talents on so *dear* a business.’

Bal. I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

Rom. So shalt thou show me friendship.—Take thou that :

Live, and be prosperous ; and farewell, good fellow.

Bal. For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout ; His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt. [*Retires.*

Rom. Thou détestable⁴ maw, thou womb of death, Gorg'd with the dearest morsel of the earth, Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,

[*Breaking open the Door of the Monument.* And, in despite, I'll cram thee with more food !

Par. This is that banish'd haughty Montague, That murder'd my love's cousin ;—with which grief, It is supposed the fair creature died,— And here is come to do some villanous shame To the dead bodies : I will apprehend him.—

[*Advances.*

Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague ; Can vengeance be pursu'd further than death ? Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee : Obey, and go with me ; for thou must die.

Rom. I must, indeed ; and therefore came I hither.—

Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man ; Fly hence and leave me ;—think upon these gone ; Let them affright thee.—I beseech thee, youth, Heap not another sin upon my head, By urging me to fury :—O, be gone ! By heaven, I love thee better than myself : For I come hither arm'd against myself : Stay not, begone ;—live, and hereafter say— A madman's mercy bade thee run away.

⁴ *Detestable* was formerly accented on the first syllable, as in the present instance. So Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, b. i. can. i. st. 26 :—

‘ That détestable sight him much amaz'd.’

Par. I do defy thy conjurations⁵,
And do attach thee as a felon here.

Rom. Wilt thou provoke me? then have at thee
boy. [*They fight*]

Page. O lord! they fight: I will go call the watch
[*Exit Page*]

Par. O, I am slain! [*Falls.*]
—If thou be merciful
Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet. [*Dies*]

Rom. In faith, I will:—Let me peruse this face
Mercutio's kinsman, noble county Paris:
What said my man, when my betossed soul
Did not attend him as we rode? I think,
He told me, Paris should have married Juliet:
Said he not so? or did I dream it so?
Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
To think it was so?—O, give me thy hand,
One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!
I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave,—
A grave? O, no; a lantern⁶, slaughter'd youth,

⁵ I refuse to do as thou conjurest me to do, i. e. depart. S
Constance, in King John, says:—

‘No, I defy all counsel, all redress.’

⁶ A *lantern* may not, in this instance, signify an enclosure for
a lighted candle, but a *louvre*, or what in ancient records is
styled *lanternium*, i. e. a spacious round or octagonal turret full
of windows, by means of which cathedrals and sometimes halls
are illuminated. See the beautiful *lantern* at Ely Minster.

The same word, with the same sense, occurs in Churchyard
Siege of Edinbrough Castle:—

‘This lofty seat and *lantern* of that land

Like lodestarrs stode, and lokte o'er ev'ry streete.’

And in Holland's translation of Pliny's Nat. Hist. b. xxxv.:—

‘Hence came the *louvers* and *lanternes* reared over the roofes of
temples.’

A *presence* is a public room, which is at times the *presence*
chamber of a sovereign. This thought, extravagant as it is,
borrowed by Middleton in his Blurt Master Constable:—

‘The darkest dungeon which spite can devise
To throw this carcase in, her glorious eyes
Can make as lightsome as the fairest chamber
In Paris Louvre.’

here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
 this vault a feasting presence full of light.
 O, lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd.

[*Laying PARIS in the Monument.*

How oft when men are at the point of death
 Have they been merry? which their keepers call
 lightning before death: O, how may I
 Call this a lightning?—O, my love! my wife!
 O that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath,
 O that had no power yet upon thy beauty:
 Thou art not conquer'd; beauty's ensign yet
 Crimson in thy lips, and in thy cheeks,
 And death's pale flag is not advanced there.—
 O balm, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?
 What more favour can I do to thee,
 Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain,
 To sunder his that was thine enemy?
 Forgive me, cousin!—Ah, dear Juliet,
 Why art thou yet so fair? Shall I believe

The first quarto reads, '*But how,*' &c. This idea very frequently occurs in our old dramas. So in the Second Part of the Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntingdon, 1601:—

'I thought it was a *lightning before death*,
 Too sudden to be certain.'

So in Sidney's Arcadia, b. iii.:—'Death being able to divide
 soule, but not the beauty from her body.' And in Daniel's
 Complaint of Rosamond, 1594:—

'Decayed roses of discoloured cheeks
 Do yet retain some notes of former grace,
 And ugly death sits fair within her face.'

'Death's pale flag,' in the subsequent line, has also its prototype
 Daniel's Complaint of Rosamond, 1594:—

'And nought respecting death (the last of paines)
 Plac'd his *pale colours* (th' *ensign* of his might)
 Upon his new-got spoil,' &c.

A passage in Marini's Rime Lugubri, 1604, p. 149, bears a very
 strong resemblance to this; but Daniel could not have borrowed
 as Malone suggests:—

'*Morte la'nsegna sua, pallida e bianca,*
Vincitrice spiegò su'l volto mio.'

That unsubstantial death is amorous⁹;
 And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
 Thee here in dark to be his paramour?
 For fear of that, I will still stay with thee;
 And never from this palace of dim night¹⁰
 Depart again; here, here will I remain
 With worms that are thy chambermaids; O, here
 Will I set up my everlasting rest¹¹;
 And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
 From this world-wearied flesh.—Eyes, look your
 last!
 Arms, take your last embrace! and lips, O you

⁹ Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. 1632, p. 463, speaking of the power of beauty, tells us:—‘But of all the tales in this kinde, that is most memorable of Death himselfe, when he should have stroken a sweet young virgin with his dart he fell in love with the object.’ Burton refers to the *Ερωτο-παίγνιον* of Angerianus; but Steevens had met with the same fable in some other ancient book. So in *Daniel’s Complaint of Rosamond*:—

‘Ah, now methinks I see *death dallying seeks*
To entertain itselfe in love’s sweete place.’

In the quarto of 1597 the above passage appears thus:—

‘———— Ah, dear Juliet,
 How well thy beauty doth become this grave!
 O, I believe that unsubstantial death
 Is amorous, and doth court my love.
 Therefore will I, O here, O ever here,
 Set up my everlasting rest
 With worms, that are thy chamber-maids.
 Come, desperate pilot, now at once run on
 The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary barge:
 Here’s to my love.—O, true apothecary,
 Thy drugs are swift: thus with a kiss I die.’

The text follows the quarto of 1599, which corresponds with the folio; except that some superfluous words and lines, which were repeated by the carelessness of the transcriber or printer, are here omitted.

¹⁰ In *The Second Maiden’s Tragedy*, recently printed from a MS. in the Lansdown collection, monuments are styled the ‘*palaces of death.*’

¹¹ See note 1, on Act iv. Sc. 5.

The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
A dateless bargain to engrossing death!—
Come, bitter conduct¹², come, unsavoury guide!
Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy seasick weary bark!
Here's to my love! [*Drinks.*—O, true apothecary!
Thy drugs are quick.—Thus with a kiss I die.

[Dies.

*Enter at the other end of the Churchyard, FRIAR
LAURENCE, with a Lantern, Crow, and Spade.*

Fri. Saint Francis be my speed! how oft to-night
Have my old feet stumbled at graves¹³?—Who's
there?

Who is it that consorts, so late, the dead?

Bal. Here's one, a friend, and one that knows
you well.

Fri. Bliss be upon you ! Tell me, good my friend,
What torch is yond' that vainly lends his light
To grubs and eyeless skulls ? as I discern,
It burneth in the Capels' monument.

Bal. It doth so, holy sir; and there's my master,
One that you love.

Fri. Who is it?

Bal. **Romeo.**

Fri. How long hath he been there?

Bal. Full half an hour.

***Fri.* Go with me to the vault.**

Bal. I dare not, sir:

¹² Conduct for conductor. So in a former scene:—

'And fire-eyed fury be my *conduct* now.'

¹³ This accident was reckoned ominous. So in King Henry VI. Part III.:—

**'For many men that *stumble* at the threshold
Are well foretold that danger lurks within.'**

And in King Richard III. Hastings, going to execution, says:—

‘Three times to-day my foot-cloth horse did *stumble*.’

My master knows not, but I am gone hence;
And fearfully did menace me with death,
If I did stay to look on his intents.

Fri. Stay then, I'll go alone:—Fear comes upon me:

O, much I fear some ill unlucky thing.

Bal. As I did sleep under this yew-tree here,
I dreamt my master and another fought¹⁴,
And that my master slew him.

Fri. Romeo? [*Advances.*
Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulchre?—
What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace?

[*Enters the Monument.*

Romeo! O, pale!—Who else? what, Paris too?
And steep'd in blood?—Ah, what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!—
The lady stirs¹⁵.

[*JULIET wakes and stirs.*

Jul. O, comfortable friar! where is my lord?
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am:—Where is my Romeo?

[*Noise within.*

¹⁴ This is one of the touches of nature that would have escaped the hand of any painter less attentive to it than Shakspeare. What happens to a person while he is under the manifest influence of fear, will seem to him, when he is recovered from it, like a dream. Homer (book viii.) represents Rhesus dying, fast asleep, and, as it were, beholding his enemy in a dream, plunging a sword into his bosom. Eustathius and Dacier both applaud this image as very natural; for a man in such a condition, says Mr. Pope, awakes no further than to see confusedly what environs him, and to think it not a reality, but a vision. Let me add, that this passage appears to have been imitated by Quintus Calaber, xiii. 125:—

‘Πότμον ὁμῶς ορόωντες ὄνειρασιν.’

Steevens.

¹⁵ In the alteration of this play, now exhibited on the stage, Garrick appears to have been indebted to Otway, who perhaps, without any knowledge of the story as told by Da Porto and Bandello, does not permit his hero to die before his wife awakes.

Fri. I hear some noise.—Lady, come from that nest

Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep;
A greater Power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents; come, come away;
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead;
And Paris too; come, I'll dispose of thee
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns:
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming;
Come, go, good Juliet,—[*Noise again.*] I dare stay
no longer. [Exit.

Jul. Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.—
What's here? a cup, clos'd in my true love's
hand?

Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end:—
O churl! drink all; and leave no friendly drop,
To help me after?—I will kiss thy lips;
Haply, some poison yet doth hang on them,
To make me die with a restorative. [Kisses him.
Thy lips are warm¹⁶!

¹⁶ Shakspeare has been arraigned for making Romeo die before Juliet awakes from her trance, and thus losing a happy opportunity of introducing an affecting scene between these unfortunate lovers. He had undoubtedly never read the Italian novel, or any *literal* translation of it; and has in this particular followed the old poem or an older drama on the subject. Be this as it may—Augustus Schlegel remarks, that 'the poet seems to have hit upon what was best. There is a measure of agitation, beyond which all that is superadded becomes torture, or glides off ineffectually from the already saturated mind. In case of the cruel reunion of the lovers for an instant, Romeo's remorse for his overhasty self-murder, Juliet's despair over her deceitful hope, at first cherished, then annihilated, that she was at the goal of her wishes, must have deviated into caricatures. Nobody surely doubts that Shakspeare was able to represent these with suitable force; but here every thing soothing was welcome, in order that we may not be frightened out of the melancholy, to which we willingly resign ourselves, by too painful discords. Why should we heap still more upon accident,

1 *Watch*. [*Within.*] Lead, boy:—Which way?

Jul. Yea, noise?—then I'll be brief.—O happy dagger! [*Snatching ROMEO's Dagger.*
This is thy sheath [*Stabs herself*]; there rust, and
let me die¹⁷.

[*Falls on ROMEO's Body, and dies.*

Enter Watch, with the Page of PARIS.

Page. This is the place; there, where the torch
doth burn.

1 *Watch.* The ground is bloody; Search about
the churchyard:

Go, some of you, whoe'er you find, attach.

[*Exeunt some.*

Pitiful sight! here lies the county slain;
And Juliet bleeding; warm, and newly dead,
Who here hath lain these two days buried.—
Go, tell the prince,—run to the Capulets,—
Raise up the Montagues,—some others search;—
[*Exeunt other Watchmen.*

We see the ground whereon these woes do lie;
But the true ground of all these piteous woes,
We cannot without circumstance descry.

that is already so guilty? Wherefore shall not the tortured Romeo quietly

“ Shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From his world-wearied flesh?”

He holds his beloved in his arms, and, dying, cheers himself with a vision of everlasting marriage. She also seeks death, in a kiss, upon his lips. These last moments must belong unparticipated to tenderness, that we may hold fast to the thought, that love lives, although the lovers perish.'

¹⁷ Thus the quarto of 1599. That of 1597 reads:—

Ay, noise? then must I be resolute.

Oh, happy dagger! thou shalt end my fear;

Rest in my bosom; thus I come to thee.'

Enter some of the Watch, with BALTHASAR.

2 Watch. Here's Romeo's man, we found him in the churchyard.

1 Watch. Hold him in safety, till the prince come hither.

Enter another Watchman, with FRIAR LAURENCE.

3 Watch. Here is a friar, that trembles, sighs, and weeps :

We took this mattock and this spade from him,
As he was coming from this churchyard side.

1 Watch. A great suspicion; Stay the friar too.

Enter the Prince and Attendants.

Prince. What misadventure is so early up,
That calls our person from our morning's rest?

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and Others.

Cap. What should it be, that they so shriek abroad?

La. Cap. The people in the street cry—Romeo,
Some—Juliet, and some—Paris; and all run,
With open outcry toward our monument.

Prince. What fear is this, which startles in our ears?

1 Watch. Sovereign, here lies the county Paris slain;

And Romeo dead; and Juliet, dead before,
Warm and new kill'd.

Prince. Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.

1 Watch. Here is a friar, and slaughter'd Romeo's man;

With instruments upon them, fit to open
These dead men's tombs.

Cap. O heavens!—O, wife! look how our daughter bleeds!

This dagger hath mista'en,—for lo! his house
Is empty on the back of Montague,—

And is missheathed in my daughter's bosom¹⁸.

La. Cap. O me! this sight of death is as a bell,
That warns my old age to a sepulchre.

Enter MONTAGUE and Others.

Prince. Come, Montague; for thou art early up,
To see thy son and heir more early down.

Mon. Alas, my liege, my wife is dead to-night¹⁹;
Grief of my son's exile hath stopp'd her breath;
What further woe conspires against mine age?

Prince. Look, and thou shalt see.

Mon. O thou untaught! what manners is in this,
To press before thy father to a grave²⁰?

Prince. Seal up the mouth of outrage for a while,
'Till we can clear these ambiguities,
And know their spring, their head, their true descent;
And then will I be general of your woes;

¹⁸ The words, 'for lo! his house is empty on the back of Montague,' are to be considered parenthetical. It appears that the *dagger* was anciently worn *behind the back*. So in *Humor's Ordinary*:—

'See you yon huge bum *dagger at his back*?'

And in *The Longer Thou Livest the More Fool Thou Art*, 1570:

'Thou must wear thy sword by thy side,
And thy *dagger* handsumly *at thy back*.'

¹⁹ After this line the quarto of 1597 adds:—

'And young Benvolio is deceased too.'

²⁰ So in *The Tragedy of Darius*, 1603:—

'Ah me! malicious fates have done me wrong:
Who came first to the world, should first depart.
It not becomes the old t' o'er-live the young;
This dealing is preposterous and over-thwart.'

Thus also in *Shakspeare's Rape of Lucrece*:—

'If children pre-decease progenitors,
We are their offspring, and they none of ours.'

And lead you even to death: Mean time forbear,
And let mischance be slave to patience.—
Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

Fri. I am the greatest, able to do least,
Yet most suspected, as the time and place
Doth make against me, of this direful murder;
And here I stand, both to impeach and purge
Myself condemned and myself excus'd.

Prince. Then say at once what thou dost know
in this.

Fri. I will be brief²¹, for my short date of breath
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.

Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet;
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife:
I married them; and their stolen marriage-day
Was Tybalt's doomsday, whose untimely death
Banish'd the new made bridegroom from this city;
For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pin'd.
You—to remove that siege of grief from her,—
Betroth'd, and would have married her perforce,
To county Paris:—Then comes she to me;
And, with wild looks, bid me devise some means
To rid her from this second marriage,
Or, in my cell there would she kill herself.
Then gave I her, so tutor'd by my art,
A sleeping potion; which so took effect
As I intended, for it wrought on her
The form of death: meantime I writ to Romeo,

²¹ 'It is to be lamented that the poet did not conclude the dialogue with the action, and avoid a narrative of events which the audience already knew.'—*Johnson*.

Shakspeare was led into this uninteresting narrative by following too closely The Tragical Hystory of Romeus and Juliet. In this poem (which is printed in the Variorum Editions of Shakspeare) the bodies of the dead are removed to a public scaffold; and from that elevation is the Friar's narrative delivered. The same circumstance is introduced in Hamlet near the conclusion.

That he should hither come as this dire night,
To help to take her from her borrow'd grave,
Being the time the potion's force should cease.
But he which bore my letter, Friar John,
Was staid by accident; and yesternight
Return'd my letter back: Then all alone,
At the prefixed hour of her waking,
Came I to take her from her kindred's vault;
Meaning to keep her closely at my cell,
Till I conveniently could send to Romeo:
But, when I came (some minute ere the time
Of her awakening), here untimely lay
The noble Paris, and true Romeo, dead.
She wakes; and I entreated her come forth,
And bear this work of heaven with patience:
But then a noise did scare me from the tomb;
And she, too desperate, would not go with me,
But (as it seems) did violence on herself.
All this I know: and to the marriage
Her nurse is privy: And, if aught in this
Miscarried by my fault, let my old life
Be sacrific'd, some hour before his time,
Unto the rigour of severest law.

Prince. We still have known thee for a holy man.—
Where's Romeo's man? what can he say in this?

Bal. I brought my master news of Juliet's death;
And then in post he came from Mantua.
To this same place, to this same monument.
This letter he early bid me give his father;
And threaten'd me with death, going in the vault,
If I departed not, and left him there.

Prince. Give me the letter, I will look on it.—
Where is the county's page, that rais'd the watch?
Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

Page. He came with flowers to strew his lady's
grave;

And bid me stand aloof, and so I did:
Anon, comes one with light to ope the tomb;
And, by and by, my master drew on him;
And then I ran away to call the watch.

Prince. This letter doth make good the friar's words,

Their course of love, the tidings of her death:
And here he writes—that he did buy a poison
Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal
Came to this vault to die, and lie with Juliet.—
Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!—
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!
And I, for winking at your discords too,
Have lost a brace of kinsmen²²:—all are punish'd.

Cap. O, brother Montague, give me thy hand:
This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
Can I demand.

Mon. But I can give thee more:
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;
That, while Verona by that name is known,
There shall no figure at such rate be set,
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

Cap. As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie;
Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

Prince. A glooming²³ peace this morning with it
brings;

The sun for sorrow will not show his head:

²² Mercutio and Paris. Mercutio is expressly called the Prince's kinsman in Act iii. Sc. 4; and that Paris was also the Prince's kinsman, may be inferred from the following passages. Capulet, speaking of the count in the fourth act, describes him as 'a gentleman of princely parentage;' and after he is killed, Romeo says:—

‘ ——— Let me peruse this face;

Mercutio's kinsman, noble county Paris.’

²³ The quarto of 1597 reads, 'A gloomy peace.' To gloom is an ancient verb, used by Spenser and other old writers.

Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things;
Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished²⁴:
For never was a story of more woe,
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo²⁵. [*Exeunt.*

²⁴ This line has reference to the poem from which the fable is taken; in which the Nurse is banished for concealing the marriage; Romeo's servant set at liberty, because he had only acted in obedience to his master's orders; the Apothecary is hanged; while Friar Laurence was permitted to retire to a hermitage near Verona, where he ended his life in penitence and tranquillity.

²⁵ Shakspeare in his revision of this play has not effected the alteration by introducing any new incidents, but merely by adding to the length of the scenes. The piece appears to have been always a very popular one. Marston, in his *Satires*, 1598, says:—

‘Luscus, what’s play’d to-day? faith, now I know;
I set thy lips abroach, from whence doth flow
Nought but pure Juliet and Romeo.’

The concluding lines may have been formed on the last couplet of the old poem:—

‘—— among the monuments that in Verona been,
There is no monument more worthy of the sight
Than is the tombe of Juliet and Romeus her knight.’

THIS play is one of the most pleasing of our author's performances. The scenes are busy and various, the incidents numerous and important, the catastrophe irresistibly affecting, and the process of the action carried on with such probability, at least with such congruity to popular opinions, as tragedy requires.

Here is one of the few attempts of Shakspeare to exhibit the conversation of gentlemen, to represent the airy sprightliness of juvenile elegance. Dryden mentions a tradition, which might easily reach his time, of a declaration made by Shakspeare, that *he was obliged to kill Mercutio in the third Act, lest he should have been killed by him*. Yet he thinks him *no such formidable person, but that he might have lived through the play, and died in his bed*, without danger to the poet. Dryden well knew, had he been in quest of truth, in a pointed sentence, that more regard is commonly had to the words than the thought, and that it is very seldom to be rigorously understood. Mercutio's wit, gaiety, and courage, will always procure him friends that wish him a longer life; but his death is not precipitated, he has lived out the time allotted him in the construction of the play; nor do I doubt the ability of Shakspeare to have continued his existence, though some of his sallies are perhaps out of the reach of Dryden; whose genius was not very fertile of merriment, nor ductile to humour, but acute, argumentative, comprehensive, and sublime.

The Nurse is one of the characters in which the author delighted: he has with great subtilty of distinction, drawn her at once loquacious and secret, obsequious and insolent, trusty and dishonest.

His comick scenes are happily wrought, but his pathetick strains are always polluted with some unexpected depravations*.

* A. W. Schlegel has answered this remark at length, and, as I think, satisfactorily, in a detailed criticism upon this tragedy, published in the *Horen*, a journal conducted by Schiller in 1794—1795, and made accessible to the English reader in Ollier's Literary Miscellany, Part i. In his Lectures on Dramatic Literature (vol. ii. p. 135, Eng. translation), will be found some further sensible remarks upon the 'conceits' here stigmatized. It should be remembered that *playing on words* was a very favourite species of wit combat with our ancestors. 'With children, as well as nations of the most simple manners, a great inclination to *playing on words* is often displayed; [they can-

HAMLET.



Ophelia. Good night, sweet ladies, good night.

ACT IV. SC. 3.

FROM THE CHISWICK PRESS.

1826.

His persons, however distressed, *have a conceit left them in their misery, a miserable conceit* †.

JOHNSON.

not therefore be both *puerile* and *unnatural*: If the first charge is founded, the second cannot be so.] In *Homer* we find several examples; the *Books of Moses*, the oldest written memorial of the primitive world, are, it is well known, full of them. On the other hand, poets of a very cultivated taste, or orators like Cicero, have delighted in them. Whoever, in Richard the Second, is disgusted with the affecting play of words of the dying John of Gaunt on his own name, let him remember that the same thing occurs in the Ajax of Sophocles.' S. W. S.

† This quotation is also found in the Preface to Dryden's *Fables*:—'Just John Littlewit, in Bartholomew Fair, who had a conceit (as he tells you) left him in his misery; a miserable conceit.'

STEEVENS.

HAMLET.



Ophelia. Good night, sweet ladies, good night,
Act iv. Sc. 5.

FROM THE CHISWICK PRESS.

1826.

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

THE original story on which this play is built may be found in Saxo Grammaticus, the Danish historian. From thence Belleforest adopted it in his collection of novels, in seven volumes, which he began in 1564, and continued to publish through succeeding years. It was from Belleforest that the old black letter prose 'Hystorie of Hamlet' was translated; the earliest edition of which, known to the commentators, was dated in 1608; but it is supposed that there were earlier impressions.

The following passage is found in an Epistle, by Thomas Nashe, prefixed to Greene's *Arcadia*, which was published in 1589:—'I will turn back to my first text of studies of delight, and talk a little in friendship with a few of our rival translators. It is a common practice now-a-days, among a sort of shifting companions, that runne through every art and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *Noverint* [i. e. the law] whereunto they were born, and busie themselves with the endeavours of art, that could scarcely latinize their neck-verse, if they should have neede; yet English *Seneca*, read by candle-light, yeelds many good sentences, as *Bloud is a beggar*, and so forth: and if you entreat him faire in a frosty morning, he will affoord you whole *Hamlets*, I should say, Handfuls of tragical speeches. But O grief! *Tempus edax rerum*—what is it that will last always? The sea exhaled by drops will in continuance be drie; and *Seneca*, let bloud line by line, and page by page, at length must needs die to our stage.'

It is manifest from this passage that some play on the story of Hamlet had been exhibited before the year 1589. Malone thinks that it was not Shakspeare's drama, but an elder performance on which, with the aid of the old prose History of Hamlet, his tragedy was formed.

In a tract, entitled 'Wits Miserie, or the World's Madnesse, discovering the incarnate Devils of the Age,' published by Thomas Lodge in 1596, one of the devils is said to be 'a foule lubber, and looks as pale as the vizard of the *ghost*, who cried so miserably at the theatre, *Hamlet, revenge*.' But it is supposed that this also may refer to an elder performance.

Dr. Percy possessed a copy of Speght's edition of Chaucer, which had been Gabriel Harvey's, who had written his name and the date, 1598, both at the beginning and end of the volume, and many remarks in the intermediate leaves; among which are these words:—'The younger sort take much delight in Shak-

sppeare's Venus and Adonis; but his Lucrece, and his tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, have it in them to please the wiser sort.' Malone doubts whether this was written in 1598, because *translated Tasso* is named in another note; but it is not necessary that the allusion should be to Fairfax's translation, which was not printed till 1600: it may refer to the version of the first five books of the Jerusalem, published by R. C[arew] in 1594.

We may therefore safely place the date of the first composition of Hamlet at least as early as 1597; and, for reasons adduced by Mr. George Chalmers, we may presume that it was revised, and the additions made to it in the year 1600.

The first entry on the Stationers' books is by James Roberts, July 26, 1602; and a copy of the play in its first state, printed for N. L. and John Trundell, in 1603, has recently been discovered. As in the case of the earliest impressions of Romeo and Juliet, and The Merry Wives of Windsor, this edition of Hamlet appears to have been either printed from an imperfect manuscript of the prompt books, or the playhouse copy, or stolen from the author's papers. It is next to impossible that it can have been taken down during the representation, as some have supposed was the case with the other two plays.

The variations of this early copy from the play of Hamlet, in its improved state, are too numerous and striking to admit a doubt of the play having been subsequently revised, amplified, and altered by the poet. There are even some variations in the plot; the principal of which are, that Horatio announces to the Queen Hamlet's unexpected return from his voyage to England; and that the Queen is expressly declared to be innocent of any participation in the murder of Hamlet's father, and privy to his intention of revenging his death. There are also some few lines and passages which do not appear in the revised copy. The principal variations are noticed in the course of the notes*.

It again issued from the press in 1604, in its corrected and amended state, and in the title-page is stated to be 'newly imprinted, and enlarged to almost as much again as it was, according to the true and perfect copy.' From these words Malone had drawn the natural conclusion that a former less perfect copy had issued from the press: but his star was not propitious; he never saw it. Though it is said to have formed part of the collection of Sir Thomas Hanmer, it only came to light at the

* There are some singular variations in the names of the Dramatis Personæ. *Corambis* and *Montano* are the names given to the *Polonius* and *Reynaldo* of the revised play; for *Rosencrantz* and *Guildestern* we have *Rossencraft* and *Gilderstone*; and *Osrick* is merely designated a *Braggart Gentleman*.

commencement of the present year [1825]; too late, alas! even to gratify the enthusiasm of his zealous friend, that worthy man, James Boswell; upon whom devolved the office of giving to the world the accumulated labours of Malone's latter years, devoted to the illustration of Shakspeare.

The character of Hamlet has been frequently discussed, and with a variety of contradictory opinions. Johnson and Steevens have made severe animadversions upon some parts of his conduct. A celebrated writer of Germany has very skilfully pointed out the cause of the defects in Hamlet's character, which unfit him for the dreadful office to which he is called. 'It is clear to me (says Goëthé) that Shakspeare's intention was to exhibit the effects of a great action, imposed as a duty upon a mind too feeble for its accomplishment. In this sense I find the character consistent throughout. Here is an oak planted in a china vase, proper to receive only the most delicate flowers. The roots strike out, and the vessel flies to pieces. A pure, noble, highly moral disposition, but without that energy of soul which constitutes the hero, sinks under a load which it can neither support nor resolve to abandon altogether. *All* his obligations are sacred to him; but this alone is above his powers! An impossibility is required at his hands; not an impossibility in itself, but that which is so to him. Observe how he shifts, turns, hesitates, advances, and recedes! how he is continually reminded and reminding himself of his great commission, which he, nevertheless in the end, seems almost entirely to lose sight of, and this without ever recovering his former tranquillity*.'

Dr. Akenside suggested that the madness of Hamlet is not altogether feigned; and the notion has of late been revived. Dr. Ferriar, in his Essay towards a Theory of Apparitions, has termed the state of mind which Shakspeare exhibits to us in *Hamlet*,—as the consequence of conflicting passions and events operating on a frame of acute sensibility,—*latent lunacy*.

'It has often occurred to me (says Dr. F.) that Shakspeare's character of Hamlet can only be understood on this principle:—He feigns madness for political purposes, while the poet means to represent his understanding as really (and unconsciously to himself) unhinged by the cruel circumstances in which he is placed. The horror of the communication made by his father's spectre, the necessity of belying his attachment to an innocent and deserving object, the certainty of his mother's guilt, and the supernatural impulse by which he is goaded to an act of assassination abhorrent to his nature, are causes sufficient to overwhelm and distract a mind previously disposed to "weakness and to melancholy," and originally full of tenderness and natural affec-

* William Meister's Apprenticeship, b. iv. ch. 13.

tion. By referring to the play it will be seen that his real insanity is only developed after the mock play. Then, in place of a systematic conduct, conducive to his purposes, he becomes irresolute, inconsequent; and the plot appears to stand unaccountably still. Instead of striking at his object, he resigns himself to the current of events, and sinks at length ignobly under the stream*.

A comedian of considerable talents has entered at large into the question of Hamlet's madness, and has endeavoured to show that the poet meant to represent him as insane†. Mr. Boswell, on the contrary, in a very judicious and ingenious review of Hamlet's character, combats the supposition, and thinks it entirely without foundation. He argues that 'the sentiments which fall from Hamlet in his soliloquies, or in confidential communication with Horatio, evince not only a sound but an acute and vigorous understanding. His misfortunes, indeed, and a sense of shame, from the hasty and incestuous marriage of his mother, have sunk him into a state of *weakness and melancholy*; but though *his mind is enfeebled*, it is by no means deranged. It would have been little in the manner of Shakspeare to introduce two persons in the same play whose intellects were disordered; but he has rather, in this instance, as in King Lear, a second time effected what, as far as I can recollect, no other writer has ever ventured to attempt—the exhibition on the same scene of real and fictitious madness in contrast with each other. In carrying his design into execution, Hamlet feels no difficulty in imposing upon the King, whom he detests; or upon Polonius, and his schoolfellows, whom he despises: but the case is very different indeed in his interviews with Ophelia; aware of the submissive mildness of her character, which leads her to be subject to the influence of her father and her brother, he cannot venture to entrust her with his secret. In her presence, therefore, he has not only to assume a disguise, but to restrain himself from those expressions of affection which a lover must find it most difficult to repress in the presence of his mistress. In this tumult of conflicting feelings, he is led to overact his part, from a fear of falling below it; and thus gives an appearance of rudeness and harshness to that which is, in fact, a painful struggle to conceal his tenderness‡.'

Mr. Richardson, in his Essay on the Character of Hamlet, has well observed that 'the spirit of that remarkable scene with Ophelia, where he tells her, "get thee to a nunnery," is fre-

* Essay on the Theory of Apparitions, p. 111–115.

† On the Madness of Hamlet, by Mr. W. Farren.—*London Magazine*, for April, 1824.

‡ Boswell's edition of Malone's Shakspeare, vol. vii. p. 536.

quently misunderstood ; and especially by the players. At least it does not appear to have been the poet's intention that the air and manner of Hamlet in this scene should be perfectly grave and serious ; nor is there any thing in the dialogue to justify the grave and tragic tone with which it is frequently spoken. Let Hamlet be represented as delivering himself in a light and airy, unconcerned and thoughtless manner, and the rudeness so much complained of will disappear.' His conduct to Ophelia is intended to confirm and publish the notion he would convey of his pretended insanity, which could not be marked by any circumstance so strongly as that of treating her with harshness or indifference. The sincerity and ardour of his passion for her had undergone no change : he could not explain himself to her ; and, in the difficult and trying circumstances in which he was placed, had therefore no alternative.

The poet indeed has marked with a master hand the amiable and polished character of Hamlet. Ophelia designates him as having been

‘ — the glass of fashion, and the mould of form ;’

and though circumstances have unsettled him, and thrown over his natural disposition the clouds of melancholy, the kindness of his disposition and his natural hilarity break through on every occasion which arises to call them forth.

Mr. Boswell has remarked, that ‘ the scene with the grave-diggers shows, in a striking point of view, his good-natured affability. The reflections which follow afford new proofs of his amiable character. The place where he stands, the frame of his own thoughts, and the objects which surround him, suggest the vanity of all human pursuits ; but there is nothing harsh or caustic in his satire ; his observations are dictated rather by feelings of sorrow than of anger ; and the sprightliness of his wit, which misfortune has repressed, but cannot altogether extinguish, has thrown over the whole a truly pathetic cast of humorous sadness. Those gleams of sunshine, which serve only to show us the scattered fragments of a brilliant imagination, crushed and broken by calamity, are much more affecting than a long uninterrupted train of monotonous woe.’

‘ Ophelia is a character almost too exquisitely touching to be dwelt upon. Oh, rose of May ; oh, flower too soon faded ! Her love, her madness, her death, are described with the truest touches of tenderness and pathos. It is a character which nobody but Shakspeare could have drawn in the way that he has done ; and to the conception of which there is not the smallest approach, except in some of the old romantic ballads *.’

* *Hazlitt's Characters of Shakspeare's Plays*, p. 112.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark.

HAMLET, *Son to the former, and Nephew to the present King.*

POLONIUS, *Lord Chamberlain.*

HORATIO, *Friend to Hamlet.*

LAERTES, *Son to Polonius.*

VOLTIMAND,

CORNELIUS,

ROSENCRANTZ,

GUILDENSTERN,

OSRIC, *a Courtier.*

Another Courtier.

A Priest.

MARCELLUS,

BERNARDO,

FRANCISCO, *a Soldier.*

REYNALDO, *Servant to Polonius.*

A Captain. An Ambassador.

Ghost of Hamlet's Father.

FORTINBRAS, *Prince of Norway.*

GERTRUDE, *Queen of Denmark, and Mother to Hamlet.*

OPHELIA, *Daughter to Polonius.*

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Grave-diggers,
Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants.

SCENE—Elsinore.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

ACT I.

SCENE I. Elsinore. *A Platform before the Castle.*

FRANCISCO *on his Post. Enter to him* BERNARDO.

Bernardo.

WHO's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me¹; stand, and unfold Yourself.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed,
Francisco.

Fran. For this relief, much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.

¹ i. e. *me* who am already on the watch, and have a right to demand the watchword; which appears to have been, 'Long live the king.'

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals² of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Fran. I think, I hear them.—Stand, ho! Who
is there!

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier:
Who hath reliev'd you?

Fran. Bernardo hath my place.
Give you good night. [*Exit* FRANCISCO.

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say.
What, is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Mar-
cellus.

Hor. What, has this thing appear'd again to-
night?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says, 'tis but our fantasy;
And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching this dreadful sight, twice seen of us;
Therefore I have entreated him along,
With us to watch the minutes of this night;

² Shakspeare uses *rivals* for *associates*, *partners*; and *compe-
titor* has the same sense throughout these plays. It is the ori-
ginal sense of *rivalis*. The etymology was pointed out by Acro
Grammaticus in his Scholia on Horace: 'A rivo dicto *rivales*
qui in agris rivum haberent communem, et propter enim sæpe
discrepabant.' Hanmer applied this explanation:—'Rivals, in
Latin, being originally applied to proprietors of neighbouring
lands parted only by a brook, which belonged equally to both,
and so signified *partners*:' this partnership led to contests; and
hence the word came to signify persons contending for the same
object.

That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve³ our eyes, and speak to it.

Hor. Tush! tush! 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we two nights have seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,
When you same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,
The bell then beating one,—

Mar. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes
again!

Enter Ghost.

Ber. In the same figure like the king that's dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio⁴.

Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like:—it harrows⁵ me with fear, and
wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Speak to it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form

³ To *approve* or *confirm*. 'Ratum habere aliquid.'—*Baret*.

⁴ It was a vulgar notion that a supernatural being could only be spoken to with effect by persons of learning; exorcisms being usually practiced by the clergy in Latin. Toby, in *The Night Walker* of Beaumont and Fletcher, says:—

'Let's call the butler up, for *he speaks Latin*,
And that will daunt the devil.

⁵ The first quarto reads, 'it *horrors* me.' To *harrow* is to *distress*, to vex, to disturb. To *harry* and to *harass* have the same origin, from the Gothic *haer*, an armed force. Milton has the word in *Comus*:—

'Amaz'd I stood, *harrow'd* with grief and fear.'

In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee,
speak.

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay; speak: speak I charge thee, speak.
[*Exit* Ghost.]

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? you tremble, and look
pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you of it?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself:
Such was the very armour he had on,
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once, when in an angry parle⁶,
He smote the sledded Polack⁷ on the ice.
'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus, twice before, and jump⁸ at this dead
hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

⁶ *Parle*, the same as *parley*, a conference between enemies.

⁷ i. e. the *sledged* *Polander*; *Polaque*, Fr. The old copy reads *Pollax*. Malone therefore thinks that Shakspeare wrote *Polacks*, not considering that it was in a parley, and that a general slaughter was hardly likely to ensue. Mr. Boswell suggests that it is just possible the old reading may be right, *pole-ax* being put for the person who carried the *pole-axe*, a mark of rank among the Muscovites, as he has shown from Milton's *Brief History of Muscovy*.

⁸ *Jump*. So the quarto of 1603, and that of 1604. The folio reads *just*. Jump and just were synonymous in the time of Shakspeare. So in Chapman's *May Day*, 1611:—

'Your appointment was *jumpe* at three with me.'
'Thou bendest neither one way nor tother, but art even *jumpe*
stark naught.—*Baret*, B. 486.

Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know not⁹;

But, in the gross and scope of mine opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,

Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land?
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war;
Why such impress¹⁰ of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week;
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day;
Who is't, that can inform me?

Hor. That can I;

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him),
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit with his life, all those his lands,
Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king: which had return'd

⁹ That is, 'what particular train of thought to follow, I know not,' &c. The first quarto reads:—

'In what particular to work I know not.'

¹⁰ To impress signifies only to retain shipwrights by giving them *prest* money for holding themselves in readiness to be employed. Thus in Chapman's second book of Homer's *Odyssey*:—

'I from the people straight will *press* for you,
Free volunteers.'

See *King Lear*, Act iv. Sc. 2; and Blount's *Glossography*, in v. *prest*.

To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
 Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same co-mart¹¹,
 And carriage of the article design'd¹²,
 His fell to Hamlet: Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
 Of unimproved mettle hot and full¹³,
 Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
 Shark'd¹⁴ up a list of landless resolute,
 For food and diet, to some enterprise
 That hath a stomach¹⁵ in't: which is no other
 (As it doth well appear unto our state),
 But to recover of us, by strong hand,
 And terms compulsory, those 'foresaid lands
 So by his father lost: And this, I take it,
 Is the main motive of our preparations;
 The source of this our watch; and the chief head
 Of this post-haste and romage¹⁶ in the land.

¹¹ *Co-mart* is the reading of the quarto of 1604; the folio reads, *covenant*. *Co-mart*, it is presumed, means a *joint bargain*. No other instance of the word is known.

¹² i. e. 'and import of that article *marked out*, assigned or appointed for that purpose.' *Designed* is here used in the sense of *designatus*, Lat.

¹³ The first quarto reads, 'Of *inapproved*.' 'Of *unimproved* mettle hot and full;' i. e. of *unimpeached* or *unquestioned* courage. To *improve* anciently signified to *impeach*, to *impugn*. Thus Florio: 'Improbare, to *improove*, to *impugn*.' The French have still *improover*, with the same meaning; from *improbare*, Lat. Numerous instances of *improve* in this sense may be found in the writings of Shakspeare's time. And yet Johnson explains it, 'full of spirit, not regulated or guided by knowledge or experience,' and has been hitherto uncontradicted.

¹⁴ i. e. *snapped* up or *taken* up hastily. 'Scroccare is properly to do any thing at another man's cost, to *shark* or *shift* for any thing. *Scroccolone*, a cunning shifter or *sharker* for any thing in time of need, namely for *victuals*; a tall trencher-man, *shifting up and down* for *belly cheer*.' The same word also signifies to *snap*. This word has not yet lost its force in vulgar conversation.

¹⁵ *Stomach* is used for *determined purpose*.

¹⁶ *Romage*, now spelt *rummage*, and in common use as a verb, though not as a substantive, for making a thorough ransack or *search*, a busy and tumultuous movement.

¹⁷ [*Ber.* I think, it be no other, but even so :
Well may it sort¹⁸, that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch ; so like the king
That was, and is, the question¹⁹ of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is, to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy²⁰ state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.

* * * * *

As, stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun ; and the moist star²²,
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.
And even the like precurse of fierce events,—
As harbingers preceding still the fates,
And prologue to the omen²³ coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.—]

Re-enter Ghost.

But, soft ; behold ! lo, where it comes again !
I'll cross it, though it blast me²⁴.—Stay, illusion !

¹⁷ All the lines within crotchets in this play are omitted in the folio of 1623. The title-pages of the quartos of 1604 and 1605 declare this play to be 'enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect copie.'

¹⁸ i. e. fall in with the idea of, suit, accord.

¹⁹ i. e. theme, or subject.

²⁰ i. e. victorious ; the *Palm* being the emblem of victory. Chapman, in his *Middle Temple Masque*, has '*high-palm'd hearts*.'

²¹ A line or more is here supposed to be lost.

²² i. e. the moon.

'Not that night-wand'ring pale and watry star.'

Marlowe's Hero and Leander.

²³ *Omen* is here put by a figure of speech for *predicted event*.

²⁴ The person who crossed the spot on which a spectre was seen, became subject to its malignant influence. Among the reasons for supposing the death of Ferdinand, Earl of Derby,

If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:

If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me:

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing, may avoid,
O, speak!

Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
[*Cock crows.*

Speak of it:—stay, and speak.—Stop it, Marcellus.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.

Ber. 'Tis here!

Hor. 'Tis here!

Mar. 'Tis gone! [Exit Ghost.

We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable²⁵,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,

(who died young, in 1594), to have been occasioned by witchcraft, is the following:—'On Friday there appeared a tall man, who twice crossed him swiftly; and when the earl came to the place where he saw this man he fell sick.'—*Lodge's Illustrations of English History*, vol. iii. p. 48.

Johnson remarks that the speech of Horatio to the spectre is very elegant and noble, and congruous to the common traditions of the causes of apparitions.

²⁵ Thus in *Macbeth*:—

'As easy may'st thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress.'

And in *King John*:—

'Against the invulnerable clouds of heaven.'

The cock, that is the trumpet of the morn²⁶,
 Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
 Awake the god of day; and at his warning,
 Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
 The extravagant and erring²⁷ spirit hies
 To his confine: and of the truth herein
 This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock²⁸.
 Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
 Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
 This bird of dawning singeth all night long:
 And then they say no spirit dares stir abroad;
 The nights are wholesome: then no planets strike,

²⁶ 'And now the cocke, the morning's trumpeter,
 Play'd hunts-up for the day-stay to appear.'

Drayton.

²⁷ 'The *extravagant* and *erring* spirit.' '*Extra-vagans*, wandering about, going beyond bounds.' Thus in *Othello*:—

'To an *extravagant* and wheeling stranger.'

It is remarkable that *stravagant* is the reading of the first quarto, which Steevens points out as used in the sense of *vagrant*. 'They took me up for a *stravagant*.' This is the '*stravagare*' of the Italians; 'to wander, to gad, or stray beyond or out of the way.' Thus in a *Midsummer Night's Dream*:—

'And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger,
 At whose approach, ghosts *wandering* here and there
 Troop home.'

Erring is *erraticus*, straying or roving up and down. Mr. Douce has justly observed that 'the epithets *extravagant* and *erring* are highly poetical and appropriate, and seem to prove that Shakspeare was not altogether ignorant of the Latin language.'

²⁸ This is a very ancient superstition. Philostratus, giving an account of the apparition of Achilles' shade to Apollonius of Tyanna, says, 'that it vanished with a little gleam as soon as the cock crowed.' There is a Hymn of Prudentius, and another of St. Ambrose, in which it is mentioned; and there are some lines in the latter very much resembling Horatio's speech. Mr. Douce has given them in his illustrations of Shakspeare.

No fairy takes²⁹, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious³⁰ is the time.

Hor. So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn³¹, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill:
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet: for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him:
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar. Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most convenient. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The same. A Room of State in the same.

*Enter the King, Queen, HAMLET, POLONIUS,
LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords,
and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's
death

The memory be green: and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe;
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,

²⁹ i. e. No fairy *blasts*, or *strikes*. Thus in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act iv. Sc. 4:—

‘And there he blasts the tree and *takes* the cattle.’

See note on that passage.

³⁰ It has already been observed that *gracious* is sometimes used by Shakspeare for *graced*, *favoured*. Vide note on *As You Like It*, Act i. Sc. 2.

³¹ First quarto, ‘sun.’

The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
 Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy,—
 With one auspicious, and one dropping eye¹;
 With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,
 In equal scale weighing delight and dole²,
 Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
 Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
 With this affair along:—For all, our thanks.

Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,—

Holding a weak supposal of our worth;
 Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
 Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
 Colleagu'd³ with this dream of his advantage,
 He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
 Importing the surrender of those lands
 Lost by his father, with all bands⁴ of law,
 To our most valiant brother.—So much for him.
 Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting.
 Thus much the business is: We have here writ
 To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
 Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
 Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
 His further gait⁵ herein; in that the levies,
 The lists, and full proportions, are all made

¹ Thus the folio. The quarto reads:—

'With *an* auspicious and *a* dropping eye.'

The same thought occurs in *The Winter's Tale*:—'She had *one eye declined* for the loss of her husband, *another elevated* that the oracle was fulfilled.' There is an old proverbial phrase, 'To laugh with one eye, and cry with the other.'

² i. e. grief.

³ i. e. united to this strange fancy of, &c.

⁴ The folio reads, *bonds*; but *bands* and *bonds* signified the same thing in the poet's time.

⁵ *Gait* here signifies *course, progress*. *Gait* for road, way, path, is still in use in the north. We have this word again in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act v. Sc. 2:—

'Every fairy takes his *gait*.'

Out of his subject:—and we here despatch
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway;
 Giving to you no further personal power
 To business with the king, more than the scope
 Of these related articles allow⁶.

Farewell; and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. Vol. In that, and all things, will we show
 our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing; heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.*

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
 You told us of some suit; What is't, Laertes?
 You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
 And lose your voice: What would'st thou beg,
 Laertes,

That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
 The head is not more native to the heart,
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father⁷.
 What would'st thou have, Laertes?

⁶ The folio reads, 'More than the scope of these *dilated* articles allow.' I have not scrupled to read *related*, upon the authority of the first quarto, as more intelligible. Malone says, 'the poet should have written *allows*;' but the grammar and practice of Shakspeare's age was not strict in the concordance of plural and singular in noun and verb; and numerous examples might be adduced from his cotemporaries to prove this. The question is, Are the writers of that time to be tried by modern rules of grammar, with which they were not acquainted? Steevens, with a sweeping assertion, which no one conversant with MSS. of the time will allow, would attribute all such inaccuracies to illiterate transcribers or printers. We have Malone's assertion, that such *errors* are to be met with in almost every page of the first folio. The first quarto reads:—

' ——— no further personal power
 To business with the king
 Than those *related* articles do shew.'

⁷ The various parts of the body enumerated are not more *allied*, more necessary to each other, than the throne of Denmark (i. e. the king) is bound to your father to do him service.

Laer. My dread lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation;
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says
Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord, [wrung from me my slow
leave,
By laboursome petition; and, at last,
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:]
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will⁸.—
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,——

Ham. A little more than kin, and less than kind⁹.
[*Aside.*

⁸ In the first quarto this passage stands thus:—

'*King.* With all our heart, Laertes, fare thee well.

Laert. I in all love and dutie take my leave. [Exit.]

The king's speech may be thus explained:—'Take an auspicious hour, Laertes; be your time your own, and thy best virtues guide thee in spending of it at thy will.' Johnson thought that we should read, 'And *my* best graces.' The editors had rendered this passage doubly obscure by erroneously placing a colon at graces.

⁹ 'A little more than kin, and less than kind.' This passage has baffled the commentators, who are at issue about its meaning; but have none of them rightly explained it. A cotemporary of the poet will lead us to its true meaning. *A little more than kin* has been rightly said to allude to the double relationship of the king to Hamlet, as uncle and step-father, his *kindred by blood* and *kindred by marriage*. By *less than kind* Hamlet means *degenerate and base*. 'Going out of kinde (says Baret), which goeth out of kinde, which dothe or worketh dishonour to his kinred. Degener; forlignant.'—ALVEARIE, K. 59. 'Forligner (says Cotgrave), to degenerate, to grow out of kind, to differ in conditions with his ancestors.' That *less than kind* and *out of kind* have the same meaning who can doubt?

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord, I am too much i'the sun¹⁰.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not, for ever, with thy vailed lids¹¹

Seek for thy noble father in the dust:

Thou know'st, 'tis common; all, that live, must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not
seems.

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly: These, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play;
But I have that within, which passeth show;
These, but the trappings and the suits of woe¹².

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your na-
ture, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father:

¹⁰ It is probable that a quibble is intended between *sun* and *son*. The old spelling is *sonne*.

¹¹ i. e. with *eyes cast down*.

‘ ————— Vail your regard
Upon a wrong'd, I'd fain have said a maid.’

Measure for Measure, vol. i.

¹² ‘ ————— My grief lies all within;
And these external manners of lament
Are merely shadows to the unseen grief,
That swells with silence in the tortur'd soul.’

King Richard II.

But you must know your father lost a father;
 That father lost, lost his¹³; and the survivor bound
 In filial obligation, for some term
 To do obsequious sorrow¹⁴. But to perséver
 In obstinate condolément¹⁵, is a course
 Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief:
 It shows a will most incorrect to heaven¹⁶;
 A heart unfortified, or mind impatient;
 An understanding simple and unschool'd:
 For what, we know, must be, and is as common
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
 Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
 Take it to heart? Fye! 'tis a fault to heaven,
 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
 To reason most absurd; whose common theme
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
 From the first corse, till he that died to-day,
This must be so. We pray you, throw to earth
 This unprevailing¹⁷ woe; and think of us
 As of a father: for let the world take note,
 You are the most immediate to our throne;
 And with no less nobility of love¹⁸,

¹³ i. e. your father lost a father (your grandfather), *which lost grandfather* also lost his father. The first quarto reads, 'That father dead, lost his'—

¹⁴ *Obsequious* sorrow is *dutiful, observant* sorrow. Shakspeare seems to have used this word generally with an allusion to *obsequies*, or funeral rites.

¹⁵ *Condolément* for grief.

¹⁶ 'It shows a will most *undisciplined* towards heaven.'

¹⁷ *Unprevailing* was used in the sense of *unavailing* as late as Dryden's time. 'He may often *prevail* himself of the same advantages in English.'—*Essay on Dramatic Poetry*, 1st ed.

'And dyvers noble victoryes, as the history doth express,
 That he atchyved to the honor of the town,
 Could not him *prevayle* whan Fortune lyst to frown.'

Metrical Visions, by G. Cavendish, p. 81.

¹⁸ This was a common form of figurative expression. The Ghost, describing his affection for the Queen, says:—

'To me, whose love was of that dignity.'

Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart¹⁹ toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire :

And, we beseech you, bend²⁰ you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers,
Hamlet ;

I pray thee, stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply ;
Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come ;
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof
No jocund health, that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell ;
And the king's rouse²¹ the heaven shall bruit again,
Respeaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Exeunt* King, Queen, Lords, &c. POLONIUS,
and LAERTES.

¹⁹ i. e. *dispense, bestow*. Thus Dryden :—

' High state and honours to others impart,
But give me your heart.'

²⁰ To *bend* is to *incline*. ' The moste parte *bende* to, &c: In hoc consilium maxime inclinant,' &c.—*Baret*.

²¹ The quarto of 1603 reads:—

' The rouse the king shall drink unto the prince.'

A *rouse* appears to have been a deep draught to the health of any one, in which it was customary to empty the glass or vessel. Its etymology is uncertain; but I suspect it to be only an abridgment of *carouse*, which is used in the same sense.—See *Peacham's Complete Gentleman*, 1627, p. 194.

Carouse seems to have come to us from the French, who again appear to have derived it from the German *gar-auss*, to drink all out: at least so we may judge from the following passage in Rabelais, B. iii. Prologue:—' Enfants, beuvez a plein godets. Si bon ne vous semble, laissez le. Je ne suis de ces importuns lifrelofres, qui par force, par outrage, et violence contraignent les gentils compaignons trinquer, boire caraus, et allanz.'

The reader may consult Mr. Gifford's *Massinger*, vol. i. p. 240.

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
 Thaw, and resolve²² itself into a dew!
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
 His canon²³ 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!
 How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
 Seem to me all the uses of this world!
 Fye on't! O fye! 'tis an unweeded garden
 That grows to seed; things rank, and gross in nature,
 Possess it merely²⁴. That it should come to this!
 But two months dead!—nay, not so much, not two:
 So excellent a king; that was, to this,
 Hyperion²⁵ to a satyr: so loving to my mother,
 That he might not beteem²⁶ the winds of heaven
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!

²² To *resolve* had anciently the same meaning as to *dissolve*. To thaw or *resolve* that which is frozen; *regelo*.—The snow is *esolved* and melted. To till the ground, and *resolve* it into dust.—*Cooper*. This is another word in a Latin sense; but it is not peculiar to Shakspeare.

²³ The old copy reads, *cannon*; but this was the old spelling of *canon*, a law or decree.

²⁴ i. e. *absolutely, solely, wholly*. *Mere*, Lat.

²⁵ *Hyperion*, or Apollo, always represented as a model of beauty. Shakspeare has been followed by Gray in the accentuation of this name:—

‘Hyperion’s march and glittering shafts of war.’

Mr William Alexander and Drummond have accented it properly, Hypērion.

²⁶ i. e. *deign to allow*. This word being of uncommon occurrence, it was changed to *permitted* by Rowe; and to *let e’en* by Theobald. Steevens had the merit of pointing out the passage in Golding’s Ovid, which settles its meaning:—

‘———— Yet could he not *beteeme*

The shape of any other bird than egle for to seeme.’

‘———— nulla tamen alite verti

Dignatur, nisi quæ possit sua fulmine ferre.’

Rowe has an elegant imitation of this passage:—

‘I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the spring

Too rough to breathe upon her.’

The word occurs again in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Act i. sc. 2.

Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
 As if increase of appetite had grown
 By what it fed on: And yet, within a month,—
 Let me not think on't;—Frailty, thy name is wo-
 man!—

A little month; or ere those shoes were old,
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
 Like Niobe, all tears;—why she, even she,—
 O heaven! a beast, that wants discourse of reason²⁷,
 Would have mourn'd longer,—married with my
 uncle,

My father's brother; but no more like my father,
 Than I to Hercules: Within a month;
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
 She married:—O most wicked speed, to post
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
 It is not, nor it cannot come to, good;
 But break, my heart: for I must hold my tongue!

Enter HORATIO, BERNARDO, and MARCELLUS.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

²⁷ 'Oh heaven! a beast that wants *discourse of reason*.' Mr Gifford, in a note on Massinger, vol. i. p. 149, is of opinion that we should read, '*discourse and reason*.' It has, however, been shown by several quotations that '*discourse of reason*' was the phraseology of Shakspeare's time; and, indeed, the poet again uses the same language in *Troilus and Cressida*, Act ii. Sc. 2:—

 ' ————— is your blood

So madly hot, that no *discourse of reason*—

————— can qualify the same.'

In the language of the schools, '*Discourse* is that rational act of the mind by which we deduce or infer one thing from another. *Discourse of reason* therefore may mean *ratiocination*. Brute have not this *reasoning faculty*, though they have what has been called *instinct* and memory. Hamlet opposes the *discursive* power of the intellect of men to the instinct of brutes in Act iv. Sc. 4 which may tend to elucidate his present meaning, if the reader has any doubts. The first quarto reads, 'a beast devoid of reason' We have *discourse of thought*, for the *discursive range of thought* in *Othello*, Act iv. Sc. 2.

Ham. I am glad to see you well ;
Horatio,—or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant
ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend ; I'll change that name
with you.

And what make you²⁸ from Wittenberg, Horatio ?—
Marcellus ?

Mar. My good lord,——

Ham. I am very glad to see you ; good even, sir.—
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg ?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so :
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself : I know you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore ?

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow student ;
I think, it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio ! the funeral bak'd
meats²⁹

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

'Would, I had met my dearest³⁰ foe in heaven

Or³¹ ever I had seen that day, Horatio !

My father,—Methinks, I see my father.

²⁸ i. e. what do you. Vide note on *Love's Labour's Lost*,
Act iv. Sc. 3.

²⁹ It was anciently the custom to give an entertainment at a
funeral. The usage was derived from the Roman *cæna funeralis* ;
and is not yet disused in the North, where it is called an *arvel*
supper.

³⁰ See note on *Twelfth Night*, Act v. Sc. 1, p. 335.

³¹ This is the reading of the quarto of 1604. The first quarto
and the folio read, '*Ere I had ever.*'

Hor.
My lord?

Where,

Ham. In my mind's eye³², Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once, he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw! who?

Hor. My lord, the king your father.

Ham. The king my father?

Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear; till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead waste and middle of the night³³,

³² ' ————— himself behind

Was left unseen, save to *the eye of mind*.'

Rape of Lucrece.

Chaucer has the expression in his *Man of Lawe's Tale*:—

' But it were with thilke *eyen of his mind*,

Which men mowen see whan they ben blinde.'

And Ben Jonson, in his *Masque of Love's Triumphs*:—

' As only by the *mind's eye* may be seen.'

And Richard Rolle, in his *Speculum Vitæ*, MS. speaking of Jacob's Dream:—

' That Jacob sawe with *gostly eye*.'

i. e. the eye of the mind or spirit.

³³ The first quarto, 1603, has:—

' In the dead *vast* and middle of the night.'

I suffer the following note to stand as I had written it previous to the discovery of that copy.

We have 'that *vast* of night' in *The Tempest*, Act i. Sc. 2. Shakspeare has been unjustly accused of intending a quibble here between *waist* and *waste*. There appears to me nothing incongruous in the expression; on the contrary, by 'the *dead waste* and *middle* of the night,' I think, we have a forcible image of the void stillness of midnight.

Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Armed to point, exactly, cap-à-pé,
Appears before them, and, with solemn march,
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd,
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd³⁴
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;
And I with them, the third night kept the watch;
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes; I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.

Ham.

But where was this?

Hor. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor.

My lord, I did:

But answer made it none: yet once, methought,
It lifted up its head, and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;
But, even then, the morning cock crew loud³⁵;
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham.

'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;

³⁴ The folio reads, *bestill'd*.

³⁵ 'It is a most inimitable circumstance in Shakspeare so to have managed this popular idea, as to make the Ghost, which has been so long obstinately silent, and of course must be dismissed by the morning, begin or rather prepare to speak, and to be interrupted at the very critical time of the crowing of a cock. Another poet, according to custom, would have suffered his ghost tamely to vanish, without contriving this start, which is like a start of guilt: to say nothing of the aggravation of the future suspense occasioned by this preparation to speak, and to impart some mysterious secret. Less would have been expected if nothing had been promised.'—*T. Warton*.

And we did think it writ down in our duty,
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?

All. We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

All. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

All. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not
His face.

Hor. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver³⁶ up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?

Hor. A countenance more
In sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would, I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like,
Very like: Stay'd it long?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell
a hundred.

Mar. Ber. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw it.

Ham. His beard was grizzl'd? no?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd³⁷.

³⁶ That part of the helmet which may be lifted up. Mr. Douce has given representations of the beaver, and other parts of a helmet, and fully explained them in his *Illustrations*, vol. i. p. 443.

³⁷ 'And sable curls all silver'd o'er with white.'
Shakspeare's Twelfth Sonnet.

Ham. I will watch to-night;
Perchance, 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant you, it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable³⁸ in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue;
I will requite your loves: So, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: Farewell.

[*Exeunt* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and
BERNARDO.

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: 'would, the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul: Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.
[*Exit.*

SCENE III. *A Room in Polonius' House.*

Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessities are embark'd; farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,

³⁸ The quarto of 1603 reads *tenible*. The other quartos *tenable*. The folio of 1623 *treble*.

Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute¹;
No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer.

Think it no more:

For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews², and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps, he loves you now;
And now no soil, nor cautel³ doth besmirch⁴
The virtue of his will: but, you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and health of the whole state⁵;

¹ This is the reading of the quarto copy. The folio has—

‘ ——— sweet, not lasting,

The suppliance of a minute.’

It is plain that *perfume* is necessary to exemplify the idea of *sweet not lasting*. ‘*The suppliance of a minute*’ should seem to mean *supplying* or enduring only that short space of time as transitory and evanescent. The simile is eminently beautiful: it is to be regretted that it should be obscured by an unusual word.

² i. e. sinews and muscular strength. Vide note on the Second Part of King Henry IV. Act iii. Sc. 2.

³ *Cautel* is cautious circumspection, subtlety, or deceit. Minshew explains it, ‘a crafty way to deceive.’ Thus in a Lover’s Complaint:—

‘In him a plenitude of subtle matter,

Applied to *cautels*, all strange forms receives.’

And in Coriolanus:—

‘ ——— be caught by *cautelous* baits and practice.’

‘The virtue of his will’ means his virtuous intentions.

⁴ *Besmirch* is besmear, or sully.

⁵ ‘The safety and health of the whole state.’ Thus the quarto of 1604. In the folio it is altered to ‘*The sanctity*,’ &c. supposing the metre defective. But *safety* is used as a trisyllable by Spenser and others. Thus Hall in his first Satire, b. iii.:—

‘Nor fish can dive so deep in yielding sea,
Though Thetis self should swear her safety.’

And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
 Unto the voice and yielding of that body,
 Whereof he is the head: Then if he says he loves
 you,

It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
 As he in his particular act and place
 May give his saying deed; which is no further,
 Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
 Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
 If with too credent ear you list⁶ his songs;
 Or lose your heart; or your chaste treasure open
 To his unmaster'd⁷ importunity.

Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
 And keep you in the rear of your affection,
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.
 The chariest⁸ maid is prodigal enough,
 If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
 Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes:
 The canker galls the infants of the spring,
 Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd;
 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
 Contagious blastments are most imminent.
 Be wary then: best safety lies in fear;
 Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
 As watchman to my heart; But, good my brother,
 Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
 Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
 Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless⁹ libertine,

⁶ 'If with too *credulous* ear you *listen* to his songs.

⁷ Licentious.

⁸ i. e. the most *cautious*, the most *discreet*. In Green's *Never too Late*, 1616:—'Love requires not chastity, but that her soldiers be *chary*.' And again:—'She lives chastly enough that lives *charily*.' We have *chariness* in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; and *unchary* in *Twelfth Night*, Act iii. Sc. 4.

⁹ *Reckless*, or *negligent*; *Omissus animus*.—*Baret*.

Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own read ¹⁰.

Laer. O fear me not.
I stay too long;—But here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for
shame;
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are staid for: There,—my blessing with
you;

[*Laying his Hand on LAERTES' Head.*
And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou charácter¹¹. Give thy thoughts no
tongue,

Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel¹²;
But do not dull thy palm¹³ with entertainment

¹⁰ i. e. *regards* not his own *lesson*. In *The Two Angry Women of Abington*, 1599, we have:—‘Take heed, is a good *reed*.’ And in *Sternhold*, *Psalm* i.:—

‘Blest is the man that hath not lent
To wicked *rede* his ear.’

¹¹ i. e. mark, imprint, strongly infix. In *Shakspeare's* 122d *Sonnet*:—

‘—— thy tables are within my brain
Full *character'd* with lasting *memory*.’

And in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*:—

‘———— I do conjure thee,
Who art the table wherein all my thoughts
Are visibly *character'd* and engraved.’

¹² The old copies read, ‘with *hoops* of steel,’

¹³ ‘But do not *dull thy palm*.’ This figurative expression means, ‘do not *blunt* thy feeling by taking every new acquaintance by the hand, or by admitting him to the intimacy of a friend.’

**each new hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
entrance to a quarrel: but, being in,
or it that the opposer may beware of thee.**

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you; go, your servants tend ¹⁸.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. [Exit LAERTES.]

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the lord
Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought:
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous:
If it be so (as so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution), I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour:
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late, made many tenders
Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection? puh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted ¹⁹ in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,

wear out,' says Johnson. But hear one of the poet's cotemporaries:—'*To season, to temper wisely, to make more pleasant and acceptable.*'—*Baret*. This is the sense required, and is a better commentary than the *conjectures* of the learned critics, Warburton and Johnson, could supply. Thus in Act ii. Sc. 1, Polonius says to Reynaldo, 'You may *season* it in the charge.' And in a former scene Horatio says:—

'Season your admiration for a while.'

¹⁸ Wait.

¹⁹ i. e. untried, inexperienced.

Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wronging it thus), you'll tender me a fool²⁰.

Oph. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion²¹.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech,
My lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks²². I do
know,

When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows²³: these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a making,—
You must not take for fire. From this time,
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments²⁴ at a higher rate,
Than a command to parley. For lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, That he is young;
And with a larger tether²⁵ may he walk,

²⁰ Shakspeare makes Polonius play on the equivocal use of the word *tender*, which was anciently used in the sense of *regard* or *respect*, as well as in that of *offer*. The folio reads, '*roaming it thus*;' and the quarto, '*wrong it thus*.'

²¹ Ophelia uses *fashion* for *manner*; and Polonius equivocates upon the word, taking it in its usual acceptation, for a *transient practice*.

²² This was a proverbial phrase. There is a collection of pigrams under that title: the woodcock being accounted a witless bird, from a vulgar notion that it had no brains. '*Springes to catch woodcocks*' means '*arts to entrap simplicity*.'

²³ '*How prodigal the tongue lends the heart vows*,' 4to. 1603.

²⁴ i. e. '*be more difficult of access, and let the suits to you for that purpose be of higher respect, than a command to parley*.' How Johnson could conceive *entreatments* to signify *company, conversation*, I am at a loss to imagine.

²⁵ i. e. with a *longer line*; a horse fastened by a string to a stake, is *tethered*: figuratively with more licence.

Than may be given you: In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows: for they are brokers²⁶,
Not of that die which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,
The better to beguile. This is for all,—
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you; come your ways.
Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. *The Platform.*

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

Hor. It is a nipping and an eager¹ air.

Ham. What hour now?

Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.

Mar. No, it is struck.

Hor. Indeed? I heard it not; it then draws near
the season,

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[A Flourish of Trumpets, and Ordnance shot
off, within.]

What does this mean, my lord?

Ham. The king doth wake to-night, and takes his
rouse².

²⁶ i. e. panders. *Brokage* and *to broke* was anciently to deal in business of an amatory nature by procurement. Thus in *A Lover's Complaint*:—

‘Know vows are ever brokers to defiling.’

¹ *Eager* was used in the sense of the French *aigre*, sharp.

² See note 21, p. 172.

Keeps wassel³, and the swaggering up-spring⁴ reels;
 And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
 The kettledrum and trumpet thus bray out
 The triumph of his pledge.

Hor.

Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry, is't:

But to my mind,—though I am native here,
 And to the manner born,—it is a custom
 More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.
 This heavy-headed revel, east and west⁵,
 Makes us traduc'd, and tax'd of other nations:
 They clepe⁶ us, drunkards; and with swinish phrase

³ The origin of the word *wassel* is thus related by Geffrey of Monmouth:—‘On Vortigern’s first interview with Rowena she kneeled before him, and presenting a cup of wine, said to him Lord king *wæs hæl*, i. e. be health, or health be to you! Vortigern, unacquainted with the Saxon language, inquired the meaning of these words, and being told that he should answer them by saying *Drinc heil*, he did so, and commanded Rowena to drink; then taking the cup from her hand he kissed the damsel and pledged her. From that time the custom remained in Britain that whoever drank to another at a feast said *Was hæl*, and he that immediately after received the cup answered *Drinc heil*.’ The story is also told in the Metrical Chronicle of Robert of Brunne. To keep *wassell* was to devote the time to festivity. Vide *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, Act v. Sc. 2. To *wake* signified to *revel at night*. Vide Florio in voce *Veggia*.

⁴ I take *upspring* here to mean nothing more than *upstart*. Steevens, from a passage in Chapman’s *Alphonsus*, thought that it might mean a *dance*.

⁵ This and the following twenty-one lines are omitted in the folio. They had probably been omitted in representation, lest they should give offence to Anne of Denmark.

⁶ *Clepe*, call clypian, Sax. The Danes were indeed proverbial as drunkards, and well they might be, according to the accounts of the time. ‘A lively French traveller, being asked what he had seen in Denmark, replied, “Rien de singulier sinon qu’on y chante tous les jours *le Roi boit*,” alluding to the French mode of celebrating Twelfth Day.’ See De Brieux *Origines de quelques Coutumes*, p. 56. Heywood in his *Philocothonista*, or *The Drunkard Opened*, &c. 1635, 4to. speaking of what he calls the vinosity of nations, says of the Danes, that they have made a profession thereof from *antiquity*, and are the first upon record

Soil our addition⁷; and, indeed it takes
 From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
 The pith and marrow of our attribute.
 So, oft it chances in particular men,
 That, for some vicious mole⁸ of nature in them,
 As, in their birth (wherein they are not guilty,
 Since nature cannot choose his origin),
 By the o'ergrowth of some complexion⁹,
 Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
 Or by some habit, that too much o'erleavens
 The form of plausible manners;—that these men,—
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect;
 Being nature's livery, or fortune's star¹⁰,—
 Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,
 As infinite as man may undergo,)
 Shall in the general censure¹¹ take corruption
 From that particular fault: The dram of bale
 Doth all the noble substance often doubt¹²
 To his own scandal.

that brought their wassel bowls and elbowe deepe healthes into this land.'—*Douce*. Roger Ascham, in one of his Letters, says, 'The Emperor of Germany, who had his head in the glass five times as long as any of us, never drank less than a good quart at once of Rhenish wine.' See also Howel's Letters, 8vo. 1726, p. 236. Muffet's Health's Improvement, 4to. 1635, p. 294. Harington's *Nugæ Antiquæ*, 8vo. 1804, vol. i. p. 349.

⁷ i. e. characterize us by a swinish epithet.

⁸ i. e. spot, blemish.

⁹ *Complexion* for humour. By *complexion* our ancestors understood the constitutions or affections of the body.

¹⁰ i. e. the influence of the planet supposed to govern our birth, &c.

¹¹ i. e. judgment, opinion.

¹² The last paragraph of this speech stands in the quarto editions thus:—

' ————— the dram of eale
 Doth all the noble substance of a doubt
 To his own scandal.'

Steevens reads:—

' ————— The dram of base

Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace, defend us¹³!—
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd¹⁴,

Doth all the noble substance *often dout* [i. e. do out.]
To his own scandal.'

Malone proposed:—

' ——— The dram of *base*

Doth all the noble substance of *worth dout*
To his own scandal.'

I see no reason why *dout* should be substituted for *doubt*. The editors have unwarrantably made the same substitution in King Henry V. Act iv. Sc. 2, and then cite it as a precedent. Mr. Boswell has justly observed, that *to doubt* may mean to bring *into doubt or suspicion*; many words similarly formed are used by Shakspeare and his cotemporaries. Thus *to fear* is to *create fear*; *to pale* is to *make pale*; *to cease* is to *cause to cease*, &c. I have followed the emendation in other respects, though I have ventured to read *bale* (i. e. evil) instead of *base*, as nearer to the reading of the first edition. A passage of similar import is in King Henry IV. Part I.:—

' ——— Oftentimes it doth present harsh rage
Defect of manners, want of government,
Pride, haughtiness, opinion, and disdain:
The *least of which*, haunting a nobleman,
Loseth men's hearts, and leaves behind a *stain*,
Upon the beauty of all parts *besides*,
Beguiling them of commendation.'

¹³ Hamlet's speech to the apparition of his father seems to consist of three parts. When he first sees the spectre, he fortifies himself with an invocation:—

' Angels and ministers of grace, defend us!'

As the spectre approaches, he deliberates with himself, and determines that, whatever it be, he will venture to address it:—

' Be thou a spirit of health,' &c.

This he says while his father's spirit is advancing; he then, as he had determined, speaks to him, and calls him:—

' ——— Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me!'

Johnson.

¹⁴ ' Art thou a god, a man, or else a ghost?

Com'st thou from heaven, where bliss and solace dwell?

Or from the airie cold-engendering coast?

Or from the darksome dungeon-hold of hell?

Acolastus, or After Wit, 1604.

Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable¹⁵ shape,
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee, Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me:
Let me not burst in ignorance! but tell,
Why thy canóniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements! why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd¹⁶,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again! What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in cómplete steel¹⁷
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature,
So horridly to shake our disposition¹⁸,
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground:
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?

¹⁵ *Questionable* must not be understood in its present acceptation of *doubtful*, but as *conversable*, inviting question or conversation; this was the most prevalent meaning of the word in Shakspeare's time.

¹⁶ Quarto 1603—*interr'd*.

¹⁷ It appears from Olaus Wormius, cap. vii. that it was the custom to bury the Danish kings in their armour. The accentuation of *cóplete* and *canónized* on the first syllable is not peculiar to Shakspeare, but the practice of several of his cotemporaries.

¹⁸ *Frame of mind*.

not set my life at a pin's fee¹⁹;
 I, for my soul, what can it do to that,
 making a thing immortal as itself?
 waves me forth again;—I'll follow it.
For. What, if it tempt you toward the flood, my
 lord,
 to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
 where beetles²⁰ o'er his base into the sea?
 there assume some other horrible form,
 which might deprive your sovereignty of reason²¹,
 draw you into madness? think of it:
 every place puts toys²² of desperation,
 without more motive, into every brain,
 that looks so many fathoms to the sea,
 and hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still:—

And I'll follow thee.

For. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

For. Be rul'd, you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
 and makes each petty artery in this body
 as hardy as the Némean lion's nerve.—

[*Ghost beckons.*

And I call'd;—unhand me, gentlemen;—

[*Breaking from them.*

I do not estimate my life at the value of a pin.'

i. e. overhangs his base. Thus in Sidney's *Arcadia*, b. i.—
 'as lift up their beetle brows, as if they would overlook the
 fitness of their under prospect.' The verb *to beetle* is
 entirely of Shakspeare's creation.

To deprive your *sovereignty* of reason,' signifies to take
 you or dispossess you of the *command* of reason. We have
 many instances of raising the idea of virtues or qualities by
 them rank in Banquo's '*royalty* of nature,' and even in
 the play we have '*nobility* of love,' and '*dignity* of love.'

i. e. whims.

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets²³ me:—
I say, away:—Go on, I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt* Ghost and HAMLET.

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after:—To what issue will this come?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it²⁴.

Mar. Nay, let's follow him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *A more remote Part of the Platform.*

Re-enter Ghost and HAMLET.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? speak, I'll go
no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt
hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;

²³ 'Villains, set down the corse, or by St. Paul
I'll make a corse of him that disobeys.'

King Richard III. Act i. Sc. 1.

To *let*, in old language is to *hinder*, to stay, to obstruct; and still
a current term in leases and other legal instruments.

²⁴ Marcellus answers Horatio's question, 'To what issue will
this come?' and Horatio also answers it himself with pious
resignation, 'Heaven will direct it.'

Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night;
 And, for the day, confin'd to fast in fires¹,
 Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
 Are burnt and purg'd away². But that I am forbid
 To tell the secrets of my prison house,
 I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
 Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;
 Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres³;
 Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
 And each particular hair to stand on end,
 Like quills upon the fretful porcupine⁴:
 But this eternal blazon must not be
 To ears of flesh and blood.—List, list, O list!—
 If thou didst ever thy dear father love,——

¹ The first quarto reads:—

‘Confin'd in *flaming* fire.’

The spirit being supposed to feel the same desires and appetites as when clothed in the flesh, the pains and punishments promised by the ancient moral teachers are often of a sensual nature. Chaucer in the *Persones Tale* says, ‘The misese of hell shall be in defaute of mete and drinke.’

‘Thou shalt lye in frost and fire,
 With sicknes and *hunger*,’ &c.

The Wyll of the Devyll, blk. l.

² Gawin Douglas really changes the Platonic hell into ‘the punytion of the saulis in purgatory.’ Dr. Farmer thus compressed his account:—‘It is a nedeful thyng to suffer panis and torment;—sum in the wyndis, sum under the watter, and in the fire uthir sum: thus the mony vices—

Contrakkit in the corpis *be done away*
And purgit.’

³ ‘How have mine eyes out of their spheres been fitted
 In the distraction of this madding fever.’ *Sh. Son.* 108.

⁴ Vide note on *The Comedy of Errors*, Act iii. Sc. 2. It is *porpentine* in the old editions in every instance. *Fretful* is the reading of the folio; the quartos read *fearful*. The *irascible* nature of the animal is noted in a curious passage of the *Speculum Vitæ*, by Richard Rolle, MS.:—

‘That beest is felle and sone is wrath,
 And when he is greved he wol do scathe;
 For when he tenes [angers] he launches out felly
 The *scharpe pinnes* in his body.’

Ham. O heaven!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder⁵.

Ham. Murder?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know it; that I, with wings
as swift

As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf⁶,
Would'st thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
'Tis given out, that sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life⁷,
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O, my prophetick soul! my uncle!

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,
(O wicked wit, and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!) won to his shameful lust

⁵ There is an allusion to the ghost in this play, or in an older one of the same name, by Lodge in his *Wit's Miserie and the World's Madness*, 1596. He describes one of his Devils, by name Hate Virtue, as 'a *foule lubber*, who looks as pale as the vizard of the Ghost, which cried so miserably at the theatre, *Hamlet, revenge.*'

⁶ The folio reads—*rots* itself, &c. In the *Humorous Lieutenant*, by Beaumont and Fletcher, we have:—

'This *dull* root pluck'd from Lethe's flood.'

Otway has a similar thought:—

'—— like a coarse and useless dunghill weed
Fix'd to one spot, and rot just as I grow.'

⁷ Quarto 1603—*heart*.

The will of my most seeming virtuous queen :
 O, Hamlet, what a falling-off was there !
 From me, whose love was of that dignity,
 That it went hand in hand even with the vow
 I made to her in marriage ; and to decline
 Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
 To those of mine !
 But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
 Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven ;
 So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
 Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
 And prey on garbage.
 But soft ! methinks, I scent the morning air ;
 Brief let me be :—Sleeping within mine orchard,
 My custom always of the afternoon,
 Upon my secure⁸ hour thy uncle stole,
 With juice of cursed hebenon⁹ in a vial,
 And in the porches of mine ears did pour
 The leperous distilment : whose effect
 Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
 That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through

⁸ This is also a Latinism, *securus*, *quiet*, or *unguarded*.

⁹ *Hebenon* may probably be derived from *henbane*, the oil of which, according to Pliny, dropped into the ears, disturbs the brain : and there is sufficient evidence that it was held poisonous by our ancestors, in Anton's *Satires*, 1606, we have :—

' The *poison'd henbane*, whose cold juice doth kill.'

And Drayton, in his *Baron's Wars*, p. 51 :—

' The *poisoning henbane* and the mandrake dread.'

The French name comes near in sound, *hannebane*. It is, however, possible that poisonous qualities may have been ascribed to *ebony* ; called *ebene*, and *ebeno*, by old English writers. Marlow, in his *Jew of Malta*, speaking of noxious things, says :—

' ————— The blood of Hydra, Lerna's bane,
 The juyce of *hebon*, and cocytus breath.'

The French word *hebenin*, which would be applied to any thing made from ebony, comes indeed very close to the *hebenon* of Shakspeare. In confirmation of my conjecture, I find the newly discovered quarto, 1603, reads—*hebona*.

The natural gates and alleys of the body;
 And with a sudden vigour, it doth posset
 And curd, like eager¹⁰ droppings into milk,
 The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
 And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
 Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
 All my smooth body.
 Thus was I, sleeping; by a brother's hand,
 Of life, of crown, of queen, at once despatch'd¹¹;
 Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
 Unhousel'd¹², disappointed¹³, unanel'd¹⁴;
 No reckoning made, but sent to my account
 With all my imperfections on my head:
 O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
 A couch for luxury and damned incest.
 But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,

¹⁰ In Sc. iv. we have *eager* air for sharp biting air. 'Eger (says Baret), sower, sharp, acidus, aigre.'

¹¹ Quarto 1603, *deprived*. I have elsewhere remarked that to *dispatch* and to *rid* were synonymous in Shakspeare's time.

¹² *Unhousel'd* is without having received the sacrament. Thus in Hormanni Vulgaria, 1519:—'He is departed without shryfte and housyll.' And in Speculum Vitæ, MS. it is a sin—

'To receive nat once in the yeare

Howsel and schrifte with conscience clere.'

¹³ *Disappointed* is the same as *unappointed*, and may be explained *unprepared*. A man well furnished for an enterprise is said to be well *appointed*. In Measure for Measure, Isabella addresses her brother, who is condemned to die, thus:—

'Therefore your best *appointment* make with speed.'

¹⁴ *Unanel'd* is without extreme unction. Thus in Cavendish's Life of Wolsey, edit. 1824, p. 324:—'Then we began to put him in mind of Christ's passion; and sent for the abbot of the place to *anneal* him.' 'The fyfth sacrament is *anoynting of seke men*, the whiche oyle is halowed of the bysshop, and mynystred by preestes that ben of lawfull age, in grete peryll of dethe: in lyghtnes and abatynge of theyr sikenes, yf God wyll that they lyve; and in *forgyveynge of their venyal synnes and releasyng of theyr payne*, yf they shal deye.'—*The Festyval*, fol. 171.

Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
 Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
 The glowworm shows the matin to be near,
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire¹⁵:

Adieu, adieu, adieu! remember me. [Exit.

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! What
 else?

And shall I couple hell?—O fye!—Hold, hold, my
 heart;

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
 But bear me stiffly up!—Remember thee?
 Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
 In this distracted globe¹⁶. Remember thee?

Yea, from the tables of my memory¹⁷
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
 All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
 That youth and observation copied there;
 And thy commandment all alone shall live
 Within the book and volume of my brain,
 Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven.

O most pernicious woman!

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!

My tables,—meet it is, I set it down,
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
 At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark:

[Writing.

¹⁵ *Uneffectual*, i. e. shining without heat. The use of *to pale* as a verb is rather unusual, but not peculiar to Shakspeare. It is to be found in Chaucer and our elder writers.

¹⁶ i. e. in this *head* confused with thought.

¹⁷ Thus in the Second Part of King Henry IV. Act iv. Sc. 1:—

‘And therefore will he wipe his *tables* clean,
 And keep no tell-tale in his *memory*.’

‘*Tables* or books, or registers for memorie of things,’ were then used by all ranks, and contained prepared leaves from which what was written with a *silver style* could easily be effaced.

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word¹⁸;
It is, *Adieu, adieu! remember me.*

I have sworn't.

Hor. [*Within.*] My lord, my lord,—

Mar. [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet,—

Hor. [*Within.*] Heaven secure him!

Ham. So be it!

Mar. [*Within.*] Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come¹⁹.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord!

Hor. What news, my lord?

Ham. O wonderful!

Hor. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No;

You will reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.

Mar. Nor I, my lord.

Ham. How say you then; would heart of man
once think it?

But you'll be secret,—

Hor. Mar. Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all Den-
mark,

But he's an arrant knave.

¹⁸ The quarto 1603 has—'Now to the words.' By 'Now to my word' Hamlet means now to my motto, my word of remembrance; or as it is expressed by King Richard III. *word of courage*. Steevens asserted that the allusion is to the military *watchword*. A *word*, *mot*, or *motto*, was any short sentence, such as is inscribed on a token, or under a device or coat of arms. It was a common phrase. See Ben Jonson's Works, by Mr. Gifford, vol. ii. p. 102.

¹⁹ This is the call which falconers use to their hawk in the air when they would have him come down to them. Thus in Tyro's Roaring Megge, 1598:—

'Yet ere I jounie, Ile go see the kyte,

Come, come, bird, come: pox on you, you can mute.'

Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave,
To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you are in the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit, that we shake hands, and part :
You, as your business, and desire, shall point you;—
For every man hath business, and desire,
Such as it is,—and, for my own poor part,
Look you, I will go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily; yes,
'Faith, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick²⁰, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,—
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you :
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster it as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is't, my lord?
We will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen
to-night.

Hor. Mar. My lord, we will not.

Ham. Nay, but swear't.

Hor. In faith,
My lord, not I.

²⁰ Warburton has ingeniously defended Shakspeare for making the Danish prince swear by *St. Patrick*, by observing that the whole northern world had their learning from Ireland. It is, however, more probable that the poet seized the first popular imprecation that came to his mind, without regarding whether it suited the country or character of the person to whom he gave it.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, true-penny?

Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cellarage,—
Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword²¹.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. *Hic & ubique!* then we'll shift our ground:—
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Swear by my sword,
Never to speak of this that you have heard.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear by his sword.

Ham. Well said, old mole! canst work i'the
earth so fast?

A worthy pioneer!—Once more remove, good friends.

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,

²¹ The custom of swearing by the sword, or rather by the cross at the upper end of it, is very ancient. In the Soliloquy of Roland, addressed to his sword, the cross which the gard and handle form is not forgotten:—'Capulo eburneo candidissime, cruce aurea splendidissime,' &c.—*Turpini de Gestis Carol. Mag.* cap. 22. The name of Jesus was not unfrequently inscribed on the handle. The allusions to this custom are very numerous in our old writers, and Warburton has noticed it in Bartholinus De Causis Contempt. Mort. apud Danos. Simon Maioli, in his very curious book *Dierum Canicularium*, mentions that the ancient Germans swore by the sword and death. Leonato, in *The Winter's Tale*, Act ii. Sc. 3, says:—

'————— Swear by this sword,
Thou wilt perform my bidding.'

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come;—

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy!

How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,

As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet

To put an antick disposition on,—

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,

With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As, *Well, well, we know*;—or, *We could, an if we would*;—or, *If we list to speak*;—or, *There be, an if they might*;—

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know aught of me:—This not to do,
swear²²;

So grace and mercy at your most need help you!

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit²³! So, gentlemen,

²² The quarto 1604 reads—'this do swear.' The construction of this passage is rather embarrassed, but the sense is sufficiently obvious without explanation.

²³ 'Shakspeare has riveted our attention to the ghost by a succession of forcible circumstances:—by the previous report of the terrified sentinels,—by the solemnity of the hour at which the phantom walks,—by its martial stride and discriminating armour, visible only *per incertam lunam*, by the glimpses of the moon,—by its long taciturnity, by its preparation to speak, when interrupted by the morning cock,—by its mysterious reserve throughout its first scene with Hamlet,—by his resolute departure with it, and the subsequent anxiety of his attendants,—by its conducting him to a solitary angle of the platform, by its voice from beneath the earth,—and by its unexpected burst on us in the closet. Hamlet's late interview with the spectre must in particular be regarded as a stroke of dramatic artifice. The phantom might have told his story in the presence of the officers and Horatio, and yet have rendered itself as inaudible to them as it afterwards did to the queen. But suspense was the poet's object; and never was it more effectually created than in the present instance. Six times has the royal semblance appeared, but till now has been withheld from speaking. For this event we have waited with impatient curiosity, unaccompanied by lassitude, or remitted attention.'—*Steevens.*

With all my love I do commend me to you :
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, to express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite !
That ever I was born to set it right !
Nay, come, let's go together. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Room in Polonius' House.*

Enter POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO.

Pol. Give him this money, and these notes, Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said: very well said. Look
you, sir,

Inquire me first what Danskers¹ are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expense; and finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it:
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;

¹ i. e. *Danes*. Warner, in his *Albion's England*, calls Denmark *Danske*.

As thus,—*I know his father, and his friends,
And, in part, him ;—Do you mark this, Reynaldo?*

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. *And, in part, him ;—but, you may say, not well :*

*But, if't be he I mean, he's very wild ;
Addicted so and so ;—and there put on him
What forgeries you please ; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him ; take heed of that ;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.*

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing², swearing, quarrelling,

Drabbing :—You may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. 'Faith, no ; as you may season it in the charge.

*You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency ;
That's not my meaning : but breathe his faults so quaintly,*

*That they may seem the taints of liberty ;
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind ;
A savageness³ in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.*

Rey. But, my good lord,——

Pol. Wherefore should you do this ?

Rey. Ay, my lord,
[*would know that.*

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift ;

² ' The cunning of fencers is now applied to quarrelling : they hinke themselves no men, if for stirring of a straw, they prove not their valure uppon some bodies fleshe.'—*Gosson's Schole of Abuse*, 1579.

³ ' A wildness of untamed blood, such as youth is generally assailed by.'

And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:
 You laying these slight sulkies on my son,
 As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i'the working,
 Mark you,
 Your party in converse, him you would sound,
 Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes,
 The youth you breathe of, guilty, be assur'd,
 He closes with you in this consequence;
Good sir, or so⁴; or friend, or gentleman,—
 According to the phrase, or the addition,
 Of man, and country.

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this,—He does—
 What was I about to say?—By the mass, I was
 about to say something:—Where did I leave?

Rey. At, closes in the consequence.

Pol. At, closes in the consequence,—*Ay, marry;*
 He closes with you thus:—*I know the gentleman;*
I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you say,
There was he gaming; there o'ertook in his rouse;
There falling out at tennis: or, perchance,
I saw him enter such a house of sale
(Videlicit, a brothel), or so forth.

See you now;

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:
 And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
 With windlances, and with assays of bias⁵,
 By indirections find directions out;
 So, by my former lecture and advice,
 Shall you my son: You have me, have you not?

Rey. My lord, I have.

⁴ So, for so forth, as in the last act:—'Six French rapiers and poniards with their assigns, as girdle, hanger, and so.'

⁵ i. e. by *tortuous devices* and *side essays*. 'To assay, or rather essay, of the French word essayer, tentare,' says Baret.

Pol. God be wi' you; fare you well.

Rey. Good my lord,——

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself⁶.

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his musick.

Rey. Well, my lord.
[*Exit.*

Enter OPHELIA.

Pol. Farewell!—How now, Ophelia? what's the matter?

Oph. O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

Pol. With what, in the name of heaven?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbrac'd;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved⁷ to his ancle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport,
As if he had been loosed out of hell,
To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know;
But, truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm;
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—

⁶ i. e. in your own person, personally add your own observations of his conduct to these inquiries respecting him.

⁷ Hanging down like the loose cincture which confines the fetters or gyves round the ancles.

He rais'd a sigh so pitious and profound,
 As it did seem to shatter all his bulk⁸,
 And end his being : That done, he lets me go:
 And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
 He seem'd to find his way without his eyes ;
 For out o'doors he went without their help,
 And, to the last, bended their light on me.

Pol. Come, go with me ; I will go seek the king.
 This is the very ecstasy of love ;
 Whose violent property foredoes⁹ itself,
 And leads the will to desperate undertakings,
 As oft as any passion under heaven,
 That does afflict our natures. I am sorry,—
 What, have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord ; but, as you did command,
 I did repel his letters, and denied
 His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
 I am sorry, that with better heed and judgment,
 I had not quoted¹⁰ him : I fear'd, he did but trifle,

⁸ i. e. his *breast*. 'The *bulke* or *breast* of a man, Thorax, la poitrine.'—*Baret*. Thus in King Richard III. Act i. Sc. 4, Clarence says :—

' ————— but still the envious flood
 Kept in my soul, and would not let it forth,—
 But smothered it within my *panting bulk*.'

Malone cites this and the following passage, and yet explains it *all his body* !—

' ————— her heart
 Beating her *bulk*, that his hand shakes withal.'

Rape of Lucrece.

⁹ To *foredo* and to *undo* were synonymous. Thus in Othello :—

' That either makes me or *fordoes* me quite.'

¹⁰ To quote is to *note*, to *mark*. Thus in The Rape of Lucrece :—

' Yea, the illiterate

Will *quote* my loathed trespass in my looks.'

This word in the quarto is written *coted*, which was the old orthography of *quoted*.

And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!
 It seems, it is as proper to our age
 To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
 As it is common for the younger sort
 To lack discretion¹¹. Come, go we to the king:
 This must be known; which, being kept close, might
 move
 More grief to hide, than hate to utter love¹².
 Come¹³. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *A Room in the Castle.*

*Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDEN-
 STERN, and Attendants.*

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz, and Guilden-
 stern!

Moreover that we much did long to see you,
 The need, we have to use you, did provoke
 Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
 Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
 Since not¹ the exterior nor the inward man
 Resembles that it was: What it should be,
 More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
 So much from the understanding of himself,
 I cannot dream² of: I entreat you both,

¹¹ This is not the remark of a weak man. It is always the fault of a little mind made artful by long commerce with the world. The quartos read, '*By heaven* it is as proper,' &c.

¹² This must be made known to the king, for (being kept secret) the hiding Hamlet's love might occasion more mischief to us from him and the queen, than the uttering or revealing it will occasion hate and resentment from Hamlet.' Johnson, whose explanation this is, attributes the obscurity to the poet's '*affectation* of concluding the scene with a couplet.' There would surely have been more affectation in deviating from the universally established custom.

¹³ Folio omits *come*.

¹ Quarto—*sith* nor.

² Folio—*deem*.

That,—being of so young days brought up with him:
And, since, so neighbour'd to his youth and humour³,—

That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time: so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures; and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus⁴,
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of
you;

And, sure I am, two men there are not living,
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry⁵, and good will,
As to expend your time with us awhile,
For the supply and profit⁶ of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us⁷,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But⁸ we both obey;
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent⁹,
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guilden-
stern:

³ Quarto—*haviour*.

⁴ This line is omitted in the folio.

⁵ *Gentry* for *gentle courtesy*. 'Gentlemanliness or gentry, kindness, or natural goodness. *Generositas*.'—*Baret*.

⁶ *Supply* and *profit* is *aid* and *advantage*.

⁷ i. e. *over us*.

⁸ Folio omits *but*.

⁹ There is no ground for the assertion that this metaphorical expression is derived from bending a bow. See *Much Ado About Nothing*, Act ii. Sc. 3. Hamlet in a future scene says:—

'They fool me to the very top of my *bent*.'

i. e. to the utmost of my inclination or disposition.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosen-
crantz ;

And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son.—Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence, and our prac-
tices,
Pleasant and helpful to him !

Queen. Ay, Amen!

[*Exeunt* ROS. GUIL. and some Attendants.]

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king;
And I do think (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail¹⁰ of policy so sure
As it hath¹¹ us'd to do) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to the ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit¹² to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them
in. [*Exit* POLONIUS.]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt, it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

¹⁰ i. e. the *trace* or *track*. Vestigium. It is that vestige,
whether of footmarks or scent, which enables the hunter to fol-
low the game.

¹¹ Folio—as *I have*.

¹² Folio—*news*. By *fruit dessert* is meant.

Re-enter POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND *and*
CORNELIUS.

King. Well, we shall sift him.—Welcome, my
good friends!

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Vol. Most fair return of greetings and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness: Whereat griev'd,—
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
Was falsely borne in hand¹³,—sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from Norway; and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give the assay¹⁴ of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee¹⁵;
And his commission, to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack:
With an entreaty, herein further shown,

[*Gives a Paper.*

That it might please you to give quiet pass

¹³ i. e. deluded, imposed on, deceived by false appearances. It is used several times by Shakspeare, *Macbeth*, Act iii. Sc. 1; *Much Ado about Nothing*, Act iv. Sc. 1; *Cymbeline*, Sc. ult.

¹⁴ Malone refers to the custom of *taking the assay* of wine, &c. before it was drunk by princes and other great persons, to ascertain that it was not poisoned. But the expression in the text has nothing to do with that custom. *To give the assay of arms* is 'to attempt or essay any thing in arms, or by force. *Accingi armis.*' I have to request the reader's patience for this superfluous note, but it is really sometimes impossible to resist exposing such mistakes.

¹⁵ That is, the king gave his nephew a *feud* or *fee* in land of that annual value. The quartos read *three score thousand*.

Through your dominions for this enterprise;
On such regards of safety, and allowance,
As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well:
And, at our more consider'd time, we'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business.
Mean time, we thank you for your well-took labour:
Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together:
Most welcome home!

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.

Pol. This business is well ended.
My liege, and madam, to expostulate¹⁶
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night, night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore,—since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,—
I will be brief: Your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it: for, to define true madness,
What is't, but to be nothing else but mad:
But let that go.

¹⁶ i. e. to inquire. 'Polonius is a man bred in courts, exercised in business, stored with observation, confident in his knowledge, proud of his eloquence, and declining into dotage. His mode of oratory is designed to ridicule the practice of those times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained. This part of his character is accidental, the rest natural. Such a man is positive and confident, because he knows that his mind was once strong, and knows not that it is become weak. Such a man excels in general principles, but fails in particular application. He is knowing in retrospect, and ignorant in foresight. While he depends upon his memory, and can draw from his depositaries of knowledge, he utters weighty sentences, and gives useful counsel; but as the mind in its enfeebled state cannot be kept long busy and intent, the old man is subject to the dereliction of his faculties, he loses the order of his ideas, and entangles himself in his own thoughts, till he recover the leading principle, and fall into his former train. The idea of dotage encroaching upon wisdom, will solve all the phenomena of the character of Polonius.'—*Johnson.*

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true, 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis, 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then: and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect;
Or, rather say, the cause of this defect;
For this effect, defective, comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend.

I have a daughter; have, while she is mine;
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: Now gather and surmise.
—*To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most
beautified*¹⁷ *Ophelia*,—

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; *beautified* is a
vile phrase; but you shall hear.—Thus:

*In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.*¹⁸

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.—

Doubt thou, the stars are fire;

[Reads.

Doubt, that the sun doth move:

Doubt truth to be a liar;

But never doubt I love.

¹⁷ Vile as Polonius esteems the phrase, from its equivocal meaning, Shakspeare has used it again in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*:—

‘ ——— Seeing you are *beautified*
With goodly shape,’ &c.

Nash, in his dedication of *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem*, 1594:—‘ To the most *beautified* Lady Elizabeth Cary.’ It is not uncommon in dedications and encomiastic verses of the poet's age.

¹⁸ See note on *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act iii. Sc. 1. Formerly the word *these* was usually added at the end of the superscription of letters. The folio reads:—‘ *These* in her excellent white bosom *these*.’

O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.

Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, Hamlet.

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me:
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Receiv'd his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might
you think,

When I had seen this hot love on the wing
(As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me), what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;
Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb¹⁹;
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think? no, I went round²⁰ to work,
And my young mistress thus did I bespeak;

¹⁹ 'If I had play'd the *desk*, or *table-book*;

Or given my heart a *winking*, mute and dumb.'

That is 'If I had acted the part of *depository* of their secret loves, or given my heart a *hint* to be mute about their passion.' The quartos read—'given my heart a *working*,' and the modern editors follow this reading: I prefer the reading of the folio. 'Conniventia, a *winking at*; a sufferance; a *feigning not to see or know*.' The pleonasm, *mute and dumb*, is found in the Rape of Lucrece:—

'And in my hearing be you *mute and dumb*.'

²⁰ Plainly, roundly, without reserve. Polonius, in the third act, says, 'be round with him.'

*Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy star*²¹ ;
This must not be : and then I precepts gave her,
 That she should lock herself from his resort,
 Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
 Which done, she took the fruits of my advice ;
 And he, repulsed (a short tale to make),
 Fell into a sadness ; then into a fast ;
 Thence to a watch ; thence into a weakness ;
 Thence to a lightness ; and, by this declension,
 Into the madness wherein now he raves²²,
 And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think, 'tis this ?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time (I'd fain
 know that),

That I have positively said, 'Tis so,
 When it prov'd otherwise ?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwise :

[*Pointing to his Head and Shoulder.*

If circumstances lead me, I will find
 Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
 Within the centre.

²¹ This was changed to *sphere* in the 4to. 1632, and that reading is followed by the modern editions. 'Out of thy star,' is placed above thee by *destiny*. We have fortune's *star* in a former scene. Aumerle in *King Richard III.* says :—

' Shall I so much dishonour my fair stars.'

²² ' The ridicule of this character is here admirably sustained. He would not only be thought to have discovered this intrigue by his own sagacity, but to have remarked all the stages of Hamlet's disorder, from his sadness to his raving, as regularly as his physician could have done ; when all the while the madness was only feigned. The humour of this is exquisite from a man who tells us, with a confidence peculiar to small politicians, that he could find—

" Where truth was hid, though it were hid indeed
 Within the centre."

Warburton.

A good kissing carrion" is the
reading of both folios and quarto
and is at length vindicated by
a grammatical consideration
supplied by Mr Hiram
Corson of the Cornell University
Ithaca NY (Notes & Queries
Sept 13/73). Kissing is not
the present active participle
in the text but the verbal
noun used adjectively, accor-
ding to a common English
construction. "That is, a dead
dog being, not a carrion good
at kissing, as Mr Knight & others
who hold to the reading of the
folio understand it; but a
carrion good for kissing, or to be
kissed by the pen, that there
breeds a plentiful crop of

The old copies read—'being a good kissing carrion.' The
rendition is Warburton's, who has accompanied it with a long
comment, in which he endeavours to prove that Shakspeare in-

snaggle therein. 'Kissing ear'
should be read as a compound
noun. The two words might
indeed be hyphenated like "kiss-
comfit" in the Merry Wives,
Gordon Act 5 sc 5.

"Where truth was hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre."
Warburton.

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours together,

Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him :
Be you and I behind an arras then ;
Mark the encounter : if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm, and carters.

King. We will try it.

Enter HAMLET, reading.

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away ;
I'll board ²³ him presently :—O, give me leave.—

[*Exeunt KING, QUEEN, and Attendants.*]

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, god-'a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well ; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir ; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god, kissing carrion ²⁴,——Have you a daughter?

²³ i. e. accost, address him. See *Twelfth Night*, Act i. Sc. 3.

²⁴ The old copies read—'being a good kissing carrion.' The emendation is Warburton's, who has accompanied it with a long comment, in which he endeavours to prove that Shakspeare in-

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i'the sun: conception is a blessing; but as your daughter may conceive²⁵,—friend, look to't.

Pol. How say you by that? [*Aside.*] Still harping on my daughter:—yet he knew me not at first; he said, I was a fishmonger: He is far gone, far gone: and, truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words!

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

tended the passage as a vindication of the ways of Providence in permitting evil to abound in the world. He observes that Shakespeare 'had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors *say*, but what they *think*.' This emendation, and the moral comment on it, delighted Dr. Johnson, who says 'that it almost sets the critic on a level with the author!' There was certainly much ingenuity in the emendation (which is unquestionably right) as well as in the argument, but the latter appears totally irrelevant and strained, and certainly was rather intended to show the skill and ingenuity of the critic than to raise the character of the poet, or display his *true* meaning. Warburton pointed out the same kind of expression in *Cymbeline*:—'Common-kissing Titan.' And Malone has adduced the following passage from the play of *King Edward III.* 1596, which Shakespeare had certainly seen:—

'The freshest *summer's day* doth soonest taint
The loathed *carrion* that it seems to kiss.'

²⁵ The folio reads—'Conception is a blessing, but *not* as your daughter may conceive.' Steevens thinks that there is a play upon words here, as in the first scene of *King Lear*:—

'*Kent.* I cannot *conceive* you, sir.

'*Glo.* Sir, this young fellow's mother *could*.'

But the simple meaning may be, 'though conception in general be a blessing, yet as your daughter may chance to conceive that it may be a calamity, every thing being so corrupt or sinful in the world;' he therefore counsels Polonius not to let his daughter 'walk i'the sun,' i. e. be too much exposed to the corrupting influence of the world. The abrupt transitions and obscurities of Hamlet's language are intended to give Polonius a notion of his *insanity*.

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue²⁶ says here, that old men have gray beards: that their faces are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick amber, and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: All of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, should be as old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Pol. Though this be madness, yet there's method in it. [*Aside.*] Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave?

Pol. Indeed, that is out o'the air.—How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you²⁷.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

²⁶ By 'the satirical rogue' Warburton will have it that Shakspeare means Juvenal, and refers to a passage on old age in his tenth satire. Dr. Farmer states that there was a translation of that satire by Sir John Beaumont, but is uncertain whether it was printed in Shakspeare's time. The defects of age were, however, a common topic of moral reflection.

²⁷ This speech is abridged thus in the quartos:—

'I will leave him and my daughter. My lord,
I will take my leave of you.'

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. God save you, sir! [*To POLONIUS.*

[*Exit POLONIUS.*

Guil. My honour'd lord!—

Ros. My most dear lord!—

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not overhappy;
On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true; she is a strumpet. What news?

Ros. None, my lord; but that the world is grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near: But your news is not true²⁸. [Let me question more in particular: What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord!

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being one of the worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is

²⁸ All within crotchets is wanting in the quarto copies.

nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so : to me it is a prison.

Ros. Why, then your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God! I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space; were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream²⁹.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars, bodies; and our monarchs, and outstretch'd heroes, the beggars' shadows³⁰: Shall we to the court? for, by my fay³¹, I cannot reason.

Ros. Guil. We'll wait upon you.

²⁹ Shakspeare has accidentally inverted the expression of Pindar, that the state of humanity is *σκιας ὄναρ*, the dream of a shadow. Thus also Sir John Davies:—

'Man's life is but a dreame, nay, less than so,
A shadow of a dreame.'

And Lord Sterline, in his *Darius*, 1603:—

'Whose best was but *the shadow of a dream.*'

These passages remind me of a beautiful thought in George Chapman's *Poem on the Death of Prince Henry*, which I have cited elsewhere:—

'O God, what doth not one short hour snatch up
Of all man's gloss?—Still overflows the cup
Of his burst cares; put with no nerves together,
And lighter than *the shadow of a feather.*'

³⁰ 'If ambition is such an unsubstantial thing, then are our beggars (who at least can dream of greatness) the only things of substance, and monarchs and heroes, though appearing to fill such mighty space with their ambition, but the shadows of the beggars' dreams.' Johnson thought that Shakspeare designed 'a ridicule of those declamations against wealth and greatness, that seem to make happiness consist in poverty.'

³¹ See note on *the Induction to Taming of a Shrew*, p. 351.

Ham. No such matter : I will not sort you with the rest of my servants ; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended.] But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore³² ?

Ros. To visit you, my lord ; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks ; but I thank you ; and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a halfpenny. Were you not sent for ? Is it your own inclining ? Is it a free visitation ? Come, come ; deal justly with me : come, come ; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord ?

Ham. Any thing—but to the purpose. You were sent for ; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour : I know, the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord ?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no ?

Ros. What say you ? [To GUILDENSTERN.]

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you³³ ; [Aside.]—if you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why ; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to

³² See note on *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act iv. Sc. 3.

³³ To have an eye of any one is to have an inkling of his purpose, or to be aware of what he is about. It is still a common phrase. The first quarto has :—' Nay, then I see how the wind sets.'

the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late (but, wherefore, I know not,) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises: and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me to be a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire³⁴, why, it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form, and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me, no nor woman neither; though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there is no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said, *Man delights not me?*

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten³⁵ entertainment the players shall receive from you: we coted³⁶ them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king, shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me: the adven-

³⁴ 'Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patins of bright gold.'

Merchant of Venice.

³⁵ See Twelfth Night, Act i. Sc. 5, p. 310, note 2.

³⁶ To cote is to pass alongside, to pass by:—

'—— Marry, presently coted and outstript them.'

Return from Parnassus.

'With that Hippomenes coted her.'

Golding's Ovid, Metam. ii.

It was a familiar hunting term, and its origin from à côté, French, is obvious.

turous knight shall use his foil, and target: the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace: [the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o'the sere³⁷;] and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't.—What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it, they travel³⁸? their resi-

³⁷ The first quarto reads:—‘The clown shall make them laugh that are tickled in the lungs.’ The words as they now stand are in the folio. The meaning appears to be, the clown shall make even those laugh whose lungs are tickled with a dry cough, or huskiness; by his merriment shall convert even their coughing into laughter. The same expression occurs in Howard’s *Defensive against the Poyson of supposed Prophecies*, 1620, folio:—‘Discovering the moods and humours of the vulgar sort to be so loose and *tickle of the seare*.’

³⁸ In the first quarto copy this passage stands thus:—

‘*Ham.* How comes it that they travel? do they grow restie?

‘*Gil.* No, my lord, their reputation holds as it was wont.

‘*Ham.* How then?

‘*Gil.* I faith, my lord, *novelty* carries it away, for the principal publike audience that came to them, are turned to private plays, and to the humour of *children*.’

By this we may understand what Hamlet means in saying ‘their *inhibition* comes of the late *innovation*,’ i. e. their prevention or hinderance comes from the late innovation of *companies of juvenile performers*, as the children of the revels, the children of St. Pauls, &c. They have not relaxed in their endeavours to please, but this (brood) airy of little children are now the fashion, and have so abused the common stages as to deter many from frequenting them. Thus in *Jack Drum’s Entertainment*, or *Pasquil and Catherine*, 1601:—

‘I sawe the children of Powles last night,
And troth they pleased me prettie prettie well,
The apes in time will do it handsomely.

Pla. I’faith,
I like the audience that frequenteth there
With *much applause*: a man shall not be chokt
With the stench of garlick, nor be pasted
To the barmy jacket of a beer-brewer.

‘*Bra.* ’Tis a good gentle audience, and I hope
The boys will come one day in great request.’

dence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: But there is, sir, an aiery³⁹ of children, little eyases⁴⁰, that cry out on the top of question⁴¹, and are most tyrannically clapped for't: these are now the fashion; and so berattle the common stages (so they call them), that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What, are they children? who maintains them? how are they escoted⁴²? Will they pursue the quality⁴³, no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players (as it is most like, if their means are no better,) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both

³⁹ i. e. a brood.

⁴⁰ i. e. young nestlings; properly young unfledged hawks.

⁴¹ *Question* is speech, conversation. The meaning may therefore be, they cry out on the top of their voice.

⁴² i. e. paid.

⁴³ i. e. *profession*. Mr. Gifford has remarked that 'this word seems more peculiarly appropriated to the profession of a player by our old writers.' But in *Measure for Measure*, Angelo, when the *Bawd* and *Tapster* are brought before him, inquires what *quality* they are of. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the *Outlaws* speak of men of our *quality*. And Sir Thomas Eliot, in his *Platonic Dialogue*, 1534:—'According to the *profession* or *qualitee*, wherein men have opinion that wisdome doth rest, so ought to be the forme of livinge, countenance, and gesture.' He is speaking of *philosophers*.

'No longer than they can sing,' i. e. no longer than they keep the voices of boys, and sing in the choir.

sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre⁴⁴ them on to controversy: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is it possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too⁴⁵.

Ham. It is not very strange: for my uncle is King of Denmark, and those, that would make mouths⁴⁶ at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of Trumpets within.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands. Come then: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply⁴⁷

⁴⁴ i. e. set them on, a phrase borrowed from the setting on a dog. Thus in King John:—

‘Like a dog that is compelled to fight,
Snatch at his master that doth tarre him on.’

⁴⁵ i. e. carry all the world before them: there is perhaps an allusion to the *Globe* theatre, the sign of which is said to have been Hercules carrying the globe.

⁴⁶ First copy, ‘mops and moes.’ Folio, ‘mowes.’

⁴⁷ ‘Let me comply with you in this garb.’ Hanmer, with his usual temerity, changed *comply* to *compliment*, and Steevens has contented himself with saying that he means ‘to compliment with,’ here and in a passage in the fifth act, ‘He did comply with his dug before he sucked it,’ where that sense would be even more absurd. He evidently never looked at the context. Hamlet has received his old schoolfellows with somewhat of the coldness of suspicion hitherto, but he now remembers that this is not courteous: He therefore rouses himself to give them a proper reception, ‘Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore.—Your hands. Come then, the appurtenance of welcome is fashion

with you in this garb; lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome: but my uncle-father, and aunt-mother, are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north west; when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a hand-saw⁴⁸.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern;—and you too;—at each ear a hearer: that great baby, you see there, is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

Ros. Happily, he's the second time come to them; for, they say, an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players; mark it.—You say right, sir: o'Monday morning; 'twas then, indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

and *ceremony*: let me EMBRACE you in this *fashion*: lest I should seem to give you a less courteous reception than I give the players, to whom I must behave with at least exterior politeness.' That to *comply with* was to *embrace* will appear from the following passages in Herrick:—

' ——— witty Ovid, by
Whom fair Corinna sits, and doth *comply*,
With iv'ry wrists, his laureat head, and steeps
His eye in dew of kisses, while he sleeps.'

Again:—

' ——— a rug of carded wool
Which, sponge-like, drinking in the dull
Light of the moon, seem'd to *comply*,
Cloud-like, the dainty deity.'

Dr. Nott's Selections from Herrick, pp. 127. and 153.

⁴⁸ The original form of this proverb was undoubtedly 'To know a hawk from a *hernshaw*,' that is, to know a hawk from the *heron* which it pursues. The corruption is said to be as old as the time of Shakspeare.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you; When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz⁴⁹!

Pol. Upon my honour, —

Ham. *Then came each actor on his ass,*—

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral [tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral]⁵⁰, scene individable, or poem unlimited:—Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light for the law of writ⁵¹ and the liberty:—these are the only men.

Ham. *O Jephthah, judge of Israel,*—what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why—*One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved passing well*⁵².

Pol. Still on my daughter. *[Aside.*

Ham. Am I not i'the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter, that I love passing well.

⁴⁹ Surely the commentators need not have expended their ingenuity on this common interjection.

⁵⁰ The words within crotchets are not in the quartos.

⁵¹ *Writ* for *writing*, a common abbreviation, which is not yet obsolete: we still say holy *writ*, for the sacred writings. I should not have noticed this, but that there have been editors who thought that we should read, 'the law of *wit*.' The quarto of 1603 reads, 'for the law *hath* writ.' The modern editions have pointed this passage in the following manner:—'Scene individable, or poem unlimited; Seneca cannot be too heavy nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.' I have adhered to the pointing of the quarto, because it appears to me that the *law* and the *liberty* of *writing* relates to Seneca and Plautus, and not to the players.

⁵² An imperfect copy of this ballad, of 'Jephtha, Judge of Israel,' was given to Dr. Percy by Steevens. See *Réliqués*, ed. 1794, vol. i. p. 189. There is a more correct copy in Mr. Evans's *Old Ballads*, vol. i. p. 7, ed. 1810.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows then, my lord?

Ham. Why, *As by lot, God wot*, and then, you know, *It came to pass, As most like it was*,—The first row of the pious chanson⁵³ will show you more; for look, my abridgment⁵⁴ comes.

Enter Four or Five Players.

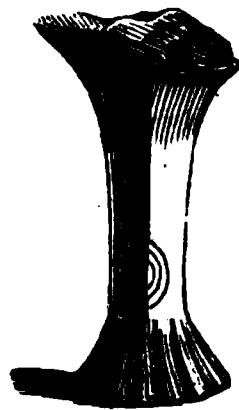
Your are welcome, masters; welcome, all:—I am glad to see thee well:—welcome, good friends.—O, old friend! Why, thy face is valanced⁵⁵ since I saw thee last; Com'st thou to beard me in Denmark?—What! my young lady and mistress! By-'r-lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven, than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine⁵⁶.

⁵³ *Pons chanson* is the reading of the first folio; three of the quartos read *pious*; and the newly discovered quarto of 1603, '*the godly ballad*;' which puts an end to controversy upon the subject. The *first row* is the first column. Every one is acquainted with the form of these old carols and ballads.

⁵⁴ The folio reads, '*abridgments come*.' My *abridgment*, i. e. who come to abridge my talk.

⁵⁵ i. e. fringed with a beard.

⁵⁶ A *chopine*, a kind of high shoe, or rather clog, worn by the Spanish and Italian ladies, and adopted at one time as a fashion by the English. Coriate describes those worn by the Venetians as some of them '*half a yard high*.' Bulwer, in his *Artificial Changeling*, complains of this fashion, as a monstrous affectation, '*wherein our ladies imitate the Venetian and Persian ladies*.' That the fashion was originally of oriental origin seems very probable: there is a figure of a Turkish lady with *chopines* in *Sandy's Travels*; and another of a Venetian courtesan in the *Habiti Antichi*, &c. di Cesare Vecellio. The annexed cut is reduced from one in Mr. Douce's *Illustrations*, copied from a real Venetian chopine.



Chapin is the Spanish name; and Cobarruvias countenances honest Tom Coriate's account of the preposterous height to which some ladies carried them. He tells an old tale of their being invented to prevent women's gadding, being first made of wood, and very heavy; and that the ingenuity of the wom

'Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring⁵⁷.—Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see: We'll have a speech straight: Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1 *Play*. What speech, my lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once,—but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once: for the play, I remember, pleased not the million⁵⁸; 'twas caviare to the general⁵⁹: but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments, in such matters, cried in the top of mine), an excellent play: well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember,

overcame this inconvenience by substituting *cork*. Though they are mentioned under the name of *cioppini* by those who saw them in use in Venice, the dictionaries record them under the title of *zoccoli*. Cobbaravias asserts that they were made of *zapino* (deal) in Italy, and not of cork; and hence their name. But the Spanish doctors differ about the etymology. Perhaps Hamlet may have some allusion to the *boy* having grown so as to fill the place of a tragedy heroine, and so assumed the *cothurnus*; which Puttenham described as 'high corked shoes, or pantofles, which now they call in Spaine and Italy *shoppini*.'

⁵⁷ The old gold coin was thin and liable to crack. There was a *ring* or circle on it, within which the sovereign's head, &c. was placed; if the crack extended beyond this ring, it was rendered uncurrent: it was therefore a simile applied to any other debased or injured object. There is some humour in applying it to a *cracked voice*.

⁵⁸ The quarto of 1603 *vulgar*.

⁵⁹ ' 'Twas *caviare* to the *general*.' *Caviare* is said to be the pickled roes of certain fish of the sturgeon kind, called in Italy *caviale*, and much used there and in other Catholic countries. Great quantities were prepared on the river Volga formerly. As a dish of high seasoning and peculiar flavour it was not relished by the *many*, i. e. the *general*. A fantastic fellow, described in Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, is said to be learning to eat macaroni, periwinkles, French beans, and *caviare*, and pretending to like them.

one said, there were no *sallets* in the lines⁶⁰; to make the matter savoury: nor no matter in the phrase, that might indite the author of *affection*⁶¹; but called it, an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas *Æneas*' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: If it live in your memory, begin at this line; let me see, let me see;—

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,—
'tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus.

*The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble,
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,*

⁶⁰ 'There were no *sallets* in the lines.' The force of this phrase will appear from the following passage, cited by Steevens, from *A Banquet of Jests*, 1665 :—'For *junkets* joci, and for *sallets* sales.' 'Sal. *Salte*, a pleasante and mery word, that maketh folke to laugh, and sometimes pricketh.'—*Baret*.

⁶¹ i. e. impeach the author with *affectation* in his style. In *Love's Labour's Lost*, Nathaniel tells the Pedant that his reasons have been 'witty without *affection*.' In the Preface to George Chapman's *Banquet of Sence*, 1595, 'obscuritie in *affection* of words and indigested conceits is pedanticall and childish.' The folio indeed reads *affectation*. The poet has probably put into the mouth of Hamlet his own genuine opinion of this speech, and the play from whence it was derived; whether it was one of his own juvenile performances, or one of those inform dramas which he had polished, it is now vain to inquire. There are words and passages which were evidently coined in his mint.

Schlegel considers it as one example of the many niceties of Shakspeare which have never been understood. He observes, that 'this speech must not be judged by itself, but in connexion with the place where it is introduced. To distinguish it as dramatic poetry in the play itself, it was necessary that it should rise above the dignified poetry of that in the same proportion that the theatrical elevation does above simple nature. Hence Shakspeare has composed the play in Hamlet altogether in sententious rhymes, full of antithesis. But this solemn and measured tone did not suit a speech in which violent emotion ought to prevail; and the poet had no other expedient than the one of which he made use, overcharging the pathos.'

*Hath now his dread and black complexion smear'd
 With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
 Now he is total gules; horridly trick'd⁶²
 With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons;
 Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
 That lend a tyrannous and a damned light
 To their lord's murder: Roasted in wrath, and fire,
 And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
 With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
 Old grandsire Priam seeks;—So proceed you.*

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken; with good accent, and good discretion.

1 Play. *Anon he finds him*

*Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
 Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
 Repugnant to command: Unequal match'd,
 Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage, strikes wide;
 But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
 The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
 Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
 Stoops to his base; and with a hideous crash
 Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for, lo! his sword
 Which was declining on the milky head
 Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick:
 So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;
 And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
 Did nothing.*

*But, as we often see, against some storm,
 A silence in the heavens, the rack⁶³ stand still,*

⁶² *Gules*, i. e. red, in the language of heraldry: to *trick* is to colour.

'With man's blood paint the ground; *gules, gules.*'

Timon of Athens.

⁶³ The *rack* is the clouds, formed by vaporous exhalation. Johnson has chosen this passage and one in Dryden of the same import to exemplify the word which he explains, 'the clouds as they are driven by the winds.'

*The bold winds speechless⁶⁴, and the orb below
As hush as death: anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region: So, after Pyrrhus' pause,
A roused vengeance sets him new a work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.—*

*Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away your power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!*

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—
'Pr'ythee, say on:—He's for a jig⁶⁵, or a tale of
bawdry, or he sleeps:—say on: come to Hecuba.

1 Play. *But who, ah woe! had seen the mobled⁶⁶
queen——*

⁶⁴ 'Even as the wind is hush'd before it raineth.'

Venus and Adonis.

⁶⁵ 'He's for a jig or a tale of bawdry.' *Giga*, in Italian, was a fiddle, or crowd; *gigaro*, a fiddler, or minstrel. Hence a *jig* (first written *gigge*, though pronounced with *g* soft, after the Italian), was a ballad, or ditty, sung to the fiddle. 'Frottola, a countrie *gigge*, or round, or country song or wanton verse.' As these itinerant minstrels proceeded, they made it a kind of farcical dialogue; and at length it came to signify a short merry interlude:—'Farce, the *jigg* at the end of an enterlude, wherein some pretie knaverie is acted.' There are several of the old ballads and dialogues called *Jigs* in the Harleian Collection. Thus also in *The Fatal Contract*, by Hemings:—

'——— we'll hear your *jigg*,
How is your *ballad* titled.'

⁶⁶ The folio reads *inobled*, an evident error of the press; for *mobled*, which means *muffled*. The queen is represented with 'a clout upon her head and a blanket wrapt round her, caught up in the alarm of fear.' We have the word in *Ogilby's Fables*:—

'*Mobbed* nine days in my considering cap.'

And in *Shirley's Gentleman of Venice*:—

'*The moon doth mobble up herself.*'

Ham. The mobled queen?

Pol. That's good; mobled queen is good.

1 *Play.* *Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning
the flames*

*With bisson*⁶⁷ *rheum; a clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood; and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst fortune's state would treason have pro-
nounc'd:*

*But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs;
The instant burst of clamour that she made
(Unless things mortal move them not at all),
Would have made milch*⁶⁸ *the burning eye of heaven,
And passion in the gods.*

Pol. Look, whether he has not turn'd his colour,
and has tears in's eyes⁶⁹.—'Pr'ythee, no more.

⁶⁷ *Bisson* is blind; *biren*, *A. S.* *Bisson rheum* is therefore *blinding tears*. In *Coriolanus* we have, '*Bisson conspecuities*.'

⁶⁸ 'Would have made *milch* the burning eye of heaven.' By a hardy poetical licence this expression means, 'Would have filled with tears the burning eye of heaven.' We have '*Lemosus, milch-hearted*,' in *Huloet's* and in *Lyttleton's Dictionaries*; and *Eliot* renders *lemosi* 'those that weep lightly.' It is remarkable that, in old Italian, *lattuoso* is used for *luttuoso*, in the same metaphorical manner. To have 'made *passion* in the Gods' would have been to move them to *sympathy* or *compassion*.

⁶⁹ 'The plays of Shakspeare, by their own power, must have given a different turn to acting, and almost new-created the performers of his age. Mysteries, moralities, and interludes afforded no materials for art to work on, no discriminations of character, or varieties of appropriated language. From tragedies like *Cambyses*, *Tamburlaine*, and *Jeronymo*, nature was wholly banished; and the comedies of *Gammer Gurton*, *Comon Condycyons*, and *The Old Wives Tale*, might have had justice done to them by the lowest order of human beings.

'*Sanctius his animal, mentisque capacius altæ*, was wanting when the dramas of Shakspeare made their first appearance;

Ham. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon.—Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstract, and brief chronicles, of the time: After your death you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. Odd's bodikin, man, much better: Use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs.

[*Exit POLONIUS, with some of the Players.*]

Ham. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow.—Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the murder of Gonzago?

1 Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll have it to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in't? could you not?

1 Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well.—Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit Player.*] My good friends [*To ROS. and GUIL.*] I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord!

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

and to these we were certainly indebted for the excellent actors who could never have improved so long as their sensibilities were unawakened, their memories burthened only by pedantic or puritanical declamation, and their manners vulgarised by pleasantries of as low an origin.'—*Steevens.*

Ham. Ay, so, good bye to you :—Now I am alone.
 O what a rogue and peasant slave am I !
 Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
 But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
 Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
 That from her working, all his visage wann'd⁷⁰;
 Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
 A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
 With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
 For Hecuba !
 What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
 That he should weep for her? What would he do,
 Had he the motive and the cue⁷¹ for passion,
 That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
 And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
 Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,
 Confound the ignorant, and amaze, indeed,
 The very faculties of eyes and ears.
 Yet I,
 A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
 Like John a-dreams⁷², unpregnant of my cause,

⁷⁰ The folio reads *warm'd*, which reading Steevens contended for: he was probably moved by a spirit of opposition; for surely no one can doubt, who considers the context, that *wann'd* is the poet's word. Indeed I question whether *his visage warm'd*, for *his face suffused*, would have entered into the mind of a writer, or the comprehension of a reader or auditor in Shakspeare's time.

⁷¹ i. e. the *hint* or *prompt word*, a technical phrase among players; it is the word or sign given by the prompter for a player to enter on his *part*, to begin to speak or act. 'A prompter (says Florio), one who keepes the booke for the plaiers, and teacheth them, or schollers their *kue*,' i. e. their *part*; and this will explain why it is used in other places, as in Othello, for *part* :—

'Were it my *cue* to fight, I should have known it
 Without a *prompter*.'

⁷² *John a dreams*, or *John a droynes*, was a common term for any *dreaming* or *droning* simpleton. There is a story told of one *John a droynes*, a Suffolk simpleton, who played the Devil in a

And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
 Upon whose property, and most dear life,
 A damn'd defeat⁷³ was made. Am I a coward?
 Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
 Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
 Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i'the throat,
 As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
 Ha!

Why, I should take it: for it cannot be,
 But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
 To make oppression bitter; or, ere this,
 I should have fatted all the region kites
 With this slave's offal: Bloody, bawdy villain!
 Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless⁷⁴
 villain!

Why, what an ass am I? This is most brave;
 That I, the son of a dear father murder'd⁷⁵,
 Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
 Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
 And fall a cursing like a very drab,
 A scullion!

stage play, in the *Hundred Merry Tales*. And there is another foolish character of that name in Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra*. *Unpregnant* is not quickened or properly impressed with.

⁷³ *Defeat* here signifies *destruction*. It was frequently used in the sense of *undo* or *take away* by our old writers. Thus Chapman in his *Revenge for Honour*:—

‘That he might meantime make a sure *defeat*
 On our good aged father's life.’

⁷⁴ *Kindless* is unnatural.

⁷⁵ The first folio reads thus:—

‘Oh vengeance!
 Who? What an ass am I? I sure this is most brave,
 That I the sonne of *the Deere* murdered.’

The quarto of 1604 omits ‘Oh vengeance,’ and reads, ‘*a deere* murdered.’ The quarto of 1603, ‘that I the son of my dear father.’

Eye upon't! foh! About my brains⁷⁶! Humph! I
 have heard,
 That guilty creatures, sitting at a play⁷⁷,
 Have, by the very cunning of the scene,
 Been struck so to the soul, that presently
 They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
 For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
 With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
 Play something like the murder of my father,
 Before mine uncle; I'll observe his looks;
 I'll tent him⁷⁸ to the quick; if he do blench⁷⁹,
 I know my course. The spirit, that I have seen,
 May be a devil: and the devil hath power
 To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and, perhaps,
 Out of my weakness, and my melancholy
 (As he is very potent with such spirits),
 Abuses me to damn me: I'll have grounds
 More relative⁸⁰ than this: The play's the thing,
 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.
[Exit.]

⁷⁶ It seems extraordinary that Mason and Steevens could ever conceive that there was any allusion here to the nautical phrase, *about ship*. 'About my brains' is nothing more than 'to work my brains.' The common phrase, to go *about* a thing, is not yet obsolete. Falstaff humours the equivocal use of the word in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*:—'No quips now, Pistol; indeed I am in the waist too yards about; but I am now *about* no waste; I am *about* thrift.' Steevens's quotation from Heywood's *Iron Age* should have taught him better:—

'My brain about again! for thou hast found
New projects now to work on,'

⁷⁷ A number of instances of the kind are collected by Thomas Heywood in his *Apology for Actors*.

⁷⁸ To *tent* was to *probe*, to search a wound.

⁷⁹ To *blench* is to shrink or start. Vide *Winter's Tale*, Act i. Sc. 2, p. 21.

⁸⁰ i. e. more *near*, more immediately connected. The first quarto reads, 'I will have sounder proofs.'

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. And can you, by no drift of conference¹
Get from him why he puts on this confusion;
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess, he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded;
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply².

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught³ on the way: of these we told him;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it: They are about the court;
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

¹ Folio—circumstance.

² 'Slow to begin conversation, but free enough in answering our demands.'

³ i. e. reached, overtook.

Pol. 'Tis most true:
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties,
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too:
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither;
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront⁴ Ophelia:
Her father, and myself (lawful espials⁵),
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge;
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,
If't be the affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you:
And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope, your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit* Queen.]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here:—Gracious, so please you,

⁴ i. e. *meet* her, *encounter* her; *affrontare*, Ital. See Winter's Tale, Act v. Sc. 1, vol iv. p. 109.

⁵ [Lawful *espials*;] that is, lawful *spies*. An *espiall* in warres, a scoutwatche, a *beholder*, a viewer.—*Baret*. See King Henry VI. Part I. Act i. Sc. 4, p. 26. An *espy* was also in use for a *spy*. The two words are only found in the folio.

We will bestow⁶ ourselves:—Read on this book;
[To OPHELIA.

That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness⁷.—We are oft to blame in this,—
'Tis too much prov'd,—that, with devotion's visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. O, 'tis too true! how smart
A lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plast'ring art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burden! [Aside.

Pol. I hear him coming; let's withdraw, my lord.
[Exeunt King and POLONIUS.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham To be, or not to be, that is the question:—
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune;
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by opposing, end them?—To die,—to sleep,—
No more;—and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ach, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die;—to sleep;—
To sleep! perchance to dream;—ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil⁸,

⁶ [*Bestow* ourselves] is here used for *hide* or *place* ourselves. We have the word in the same sense in a subsequent scene:—

'Where the dead body is *bestow'd*, my lord,

We cannot get from him.'

We now use *stow*. One of our old dictionaries makes a discrimination between the acceptations of this word, thus:—'To *bestow*, or *lay out*; to *bestow*, or *give*; to *bestow*, or *place*.'

⁷ Quarto—lowliness.

⁸ [*This mortal coil*;] that is, 'the tumult and bustle of this

Must give us pause: There's the respect⁹,
 That makes calamity of so long life:
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time¹⁰,
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely¹¹,
 The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself might his quietus¹² make
 With a bare bodkin¹³? who would fardels¹⁴ bear,
 To grunt¹⁵ and sweat under a weary life;

life.' It is remarkable that under *garbuglio*, which has the same meaning in Italian as our *coil*, Florio has 'a pecke of troubles;' of which Shakspeare's 'sea of troubles' is only an aggrandized idea.

⁹ i. e. the *consideration*. This is Shakspeare's most usual sense of the word.

¹⁰ *Time*, for *the time*, is a very usual expression with our old writers. Thus in Ben Jonson's *Every Man Out of his Humour*:

'Oh, how I hate the monstrousness of *time*.'

In Cardanus Comfort, by Thomas Bedingfield, 1599, is a description of the miseries of life strongly resembling that in the text:—'Hunger, thirst, sleape not plentiful or quiet as deade men have, heate in somer, colde in winter, *disorder of tyme*, terroure of warres, controlment of parents, cares of wedlocke, studye for children, slouthe of servaunts, *contention of sutes*, and that which is most of all, *the condycyon of tyme* wherein *honestye is disdayned* as folye, and crafte is honoured as wisdom.'

¹¹ Folio—'the poor man's contumely.'

¹² The allusion is to the term *quietus est*, used in settling accounts at exchequer audits. Thus Webster in his *Dutchess of Malfy*:—

'You had the trick in audit time to be sick,
 Till I had sign'd your *quietus*.'

And, more appositely, in Sir Thomas Overbury's character of a *Franklin*:—'Lastly to *end* him, he cares not when his end comes; he needs not feare his audit, for his *quietus* is in heaven.'

¹³ '*Bodkin* was the ancient term for a small dagger.' Vide note on Act iii. Sc. 2, p. 251.

¹⁴ Packs, burdens.

¹⁵ Though *to grunt* has been degraded in modern language, it appears to have conveyed no vulgar or low image to the ear of our ancestors, as many quotations from the old translations of *the classics* would show. 'Loke that the places about thee be

But that the dread of something after death,—
 The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn¹⁶
 No traveller returns,—puzzles the will;
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
 Than fly to others that we know not of?
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all¹⁷;
 And thus the native hue of resolution
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
 And enterprizes of great pith¹⁸ and moment,
 With this regard, their currents turn awry¹⁹,
 And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now!
 The fair Ophelia:—Nymph, in thy orisons²⁰
 Be all my sins remember'd.

Oph. Good my lord,
 How does your honour for this many a day?

so in silence that thy corage and mynde gronte nor groundge nat.' *Paynel's Translation of Erasmus de Contempt. Mundi.* The fact seems to be, that to *groan* and to *grunt* were convertible terms. 'Swyne wode for love groyneth.'—*Horman's Vulgaria.* And Chaucer in *The Monk's Tale*:—

'But never gront he at no stroke but on.'

¹⁶ Mr. Douce points out the following passages in Cranmer's Bible, which may have been in Shakspeare's mind:—'Afore I goe thither, from whence I shall not turne againe, even to the lande of darkness, and shadowe of death; yea into that darke cloudie lande and deadly shadow whereas is no order, but terrible feare as in the darknesse.'—*Job*, c. x. 'The way that I must goe is at hande, but whence I shall not turne againe.'—*Ib.* c. xvi.

'——— Weep not for Mortimer,
 That scorns the world, and as a traveller
 Goes to discover countries yet unknown.'

Marlowe's King Edward II.

¹⁷ 'I'll not meddle with it,—it makes a man a coward.'—*King Richard III.* Act i. Sc. 4. And again:—

'O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me.'

Ib. Act v. Sc. 3.

¹⁸ Quartos—pitch.

¹⁹ Folio—away.

²⁰ 'This is a touch of nature. Hamlet, at the sight of Ophelia, does not immediately recollect that he is to personate madness, but makes an address grave and solemn, such as the foregoing meditation excited in his thoughts.'—*Johnson.*

Ham. I humbly thank you ; well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver ;
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I ;

I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd lord, you know right well,
you did :

And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich : their perfume lost,
Take these again ; for to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha ! are you honest ?

Oph. My lord ?

Ham. Are you fair ?

Oph. What means your lordship ?

Ham. That if you be honest, and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty²¹.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty ?

Ham. Ay, truly ; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness ; this was some time a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me ; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it : I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery ; Why would'st

²¹ i. e., ' your honesty should not admit your beauty to any discourse with her.' The first quarto reads:—' Your beauty should admit no discourse to your honesty.' That of 1604:—' You should admit no discourse to your beauty.'

thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better, my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in²², imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in; What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven! We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us: Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him; that he may play the fool no where²³ but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry; Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery; farewell²⁴: Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough, what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. Heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings²⁵ too, well enough; God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance²⁶; Go to; I'll no more of it: it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married

²² [Than I have thoughts to put them in.] To put 'a thing into thought' is 'to think on it.'

²³ Folio—way.

²⁴ Folio—Go, farewell.

²⁵ The folio, for *paintings*, has *prattlings*; and for *face* has *pace*.

²⁶ 'You mistake by *wanton* affectation, and pretend to mistake by *ignorance*.'

already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit HAMLET.*]

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword:
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form²⁷,
The observ'd of all observers! quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his musick vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune²⁸ and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth,
Blasted with ecstasy²⁹: O, woe is me!
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter King and POLONIUS.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And, I do doubt, the hatch, and the disclose³⁰,
Will be some danger: Which for to prevent,
I have, in quick determination,
Thus set it down; He shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel

²⁷ 'Speculum consuetudinis.'—*Cicero*. The model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves.

²⁸ Quarto—*time*.

²⁹ *Ecstasy* is alienation of mind. Vide the *Tempest*, Act iii. Sc. 3.

³⁰ To *disclose* was the ancient term for *hatching* birds of any kind; from the Fr. *esclos*, and that from the Lat. *exclusus*. I believe to *exclude* is now the technical term. Thus in the *Boke of St. Albans*, ed. 1496:—'For to speke of hawkes; Fyrst they ben egges, and afterwarde they ben *dysclosed* hawks.' And 'comynly goshawkes ben disclosyd assoone as the choughs.'

This something-settled matter in his heart;
Whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well: But yet, I do believe,
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love.—How now, Ophelia?
You need not tell us what lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit after the play,
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief; let her be round³¹ with him;
And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference: If she find him not,
To England send him; or confine him, where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A Hall in the same.*

Enter HAMLET, and certain Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town crier spoke my lines¹. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear

³¹ See note on Act ii. Sc. 2.

¹ 'Have you never seen a stalking stamping player, that will raise a tempest with his tongue, and thunder with his heels.'—*The Puritan*, a Comedy. The first quarto has, 'I'd rather hear a town-bull bellow, than such a fellow speak my lines.'

a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings²: who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant³; it out-herods Herod: 'Pray you, avoid it.

² The first quarto reads, 'of the *ignorant*.' Our ancient theatres were far from the commodious elegant structures which later times have seen. The *pit* was, truly what its name denotes, an unfloored space in the area of the house, sunk considerably beneath the level of the stage; and, by ancient representations, one may judge that it was necessary to elevate the head very much to get a view of the performance. Hence this part of the audience were called *groundlings*. Jonson, in the Induction to Bartholomew Fair, calls them 'the *understanding* gentlemen of the *ground*;' and Shirley, 'grave *understanders*.'

'No shows, no dance, and what you most delight in,
Grave *understanders*, here's no target-fighting.'

Sir W. Cornwallis calls the ignorant *earthlings*. 'I have not been ashamed to adventure mine eares with a ballad-singer,—the profit to see *earthlings* satisfied with such coarse stuffe,' &c.—*Essay* 15, ed. 1623.

³ *Termagaunt* is the name given in old romances to the tempestuous god of the Saracens. He is usually joined with *Mahound* or Mahomet. Hall mentions him in his first Satire:—

Not fright the reader with the Pagan vaunt
Of mighty *Mahound* and great *Termagaunt*.'

Dr. Percy and Dr. Johnson, misled by the etymology given by Junius, have made a Saracen divinity of Termagant; and Mr. Gifford inclines to this opinion in a note on Massinger's *Renegado*, Act i. Sc. 1. It appears more probable that our old writers borrowed it from the *Tervagant* of the French, or the *Trivigante* of the Italian Romances. A learned foreigner has said, 'Trivigante, whom the predecessors of Ariosto always couple with *Appolino*, is really Diana Trivia, the sister of the classical Apollo, whose worship, and the lunar sacrifices which it demanded, had been always preserved among the Scythians.' *Quarterly Review*, vol. xxi. p. 515.—May we not rather imagine that the Hermes Trismegistus is the deity meant; for Trimegisto and Termegisto are also names of this Termagaunt?

Davenant has given the same etymology of Termagant, *Ter magnus*, i. e. Τριμύγιστρος. And resolute John Florio calls him 'Termigisto, a great boaster, quareller, killer, tamer or ruler of the universe; the child of the earthquake and of the thunder,

1 *Play*. I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action: with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirrour up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure⁴. Now this, overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one, must, in your allowance⁵, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players, that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted, and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 *Play*. I hope, we have reformed that indifferently with us.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those, that play your clowns, speak no more than is set

the brother of death.'—*World of Words*, 1611. Hence this personage was introduced into the old mysteries and moralities as a demon of outrageous and violent demeanour; or as Bale says, '*Termagauntes* altogether, and very devils incarnate:' and again, 'this terrible *Termagaunt*, this Nero, this Pharaoh.' A tyrant was always 'a part to tear a cat in.'—The murder of the innocents was a favourite subject for a mystery; and wherever Herod is introduced, he plays the part of a vaunting braggart, a tyrant of tyrants, and does indeed *outdo Termagant*.

⁴ *Pressure* is impression, resemblance.

⁵ i. e. approval, estimation. Vide *King Lear*, Act ii. Sc. 4.

down for them: for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question⁶ of the play be then to be considered: that's villanous; and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.— [Exeunt Players.

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord? will the king hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste.—

[Exit POLONIUS:

Will you two help to hasten them?

Both. Ay, my lord.

[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Ham. What, ho; Horatio!

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord,—

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter:

⁶ The quarto, 1603, '*Point in the the play then to be observed.*' Afterwards is added, '*And then you have some again that keeps one suit of jests, as a man is known by one suit of apparel; and gentlemen quotes his jests down in their tables before they come to the play, as thus:—Cannot you stay till I eat my porridge; and you owe me a quarter's wages; and your beer is sour; and blabbering with his lips: And thus keeping in his cinque a pace of jests; when, God knows, the warme Clown cannot make a jest unless by chance, as the blind man catcheth a hare: Masters, tell him of it.*'—This passage was evidently levelled at the particular folly of some injudicious player contemporary with the poet.

For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,
To feed, and clothe thee? Why should the poor be
flatter'd?

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp;
And crook the pregnant⁷ hinges of the knee,
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish her election,
She hath seal'd thee for herself: for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man, that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and bless'd are those,
Whose blood and judgment⁸ are so well co-mingled⁹,
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please: Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe my uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen;
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy¹⁰. Give him heedful note:

⁷ *Pregnant*, quick, ready.

⁸ 'According to the doctrine of the four humours, *desire* and *confidence* were seated in the blood, and *judgment* in the phlegm, and the due mixtures of the humours made a perfect character.'
Johnson.

⁹ Quarto, 1604—'co-medled.'

¹⁰ *Vulcan's stithy* is *Vulcan's workshop or smithy*; *stith* being an *anvil*.

For I mine eyes will rivet to his face¹¹;
And, after, we will both our judgments join
In censure¹² of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord:
If he steal aught, the whilst this play is playing,
And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be idle:
Get you a place.

*Danish March. A Flourish. Enter King, Queen,
POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUIL-
DENSTERN, and Others.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i'faith; of the chameleon's dish:
I eat the air, promise-crammed; You cannot feed
capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet;
these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now. My lord,—you played
once in the university, you say? [*To POLONIUS.*

Pol. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a
good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was killed
i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me¹³.

¹¹ Here the first quarto has:—

‘ And if he do not blench and change at that,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen;
Horatio, have a care, observe him well.

Hor. My lord, mine eyes shall still be on his face,
And not the smallest alteration
That shall appear in him, but I shall note it.’

¹² i. e. judgment, opinion.

¹³ A Latin play on the subject of Cæsar's death was performed at Christ Church, in Oxford, in 1582. Malone thinks that there was an English play on the same subject previous to Shak-

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O! your only jig-maker¹⁶. What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables¹⁷. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope, a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: But, by'r-lady, he must build churches then: or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse¹⁸; whose epitaph is, *For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*

¹⁶ See note on Act ii. Sc. 2, p. 231. It may here be added that a *jig* sometimes signified a spritely dance, as at present. In addition to the examples before given, take the following from Ford's *Love's Sacrifice*:—'O Giacopo! Petrarch was a dunce, Dante a *jig-maker*, Sannazar a goose, and Ariosto a puck-first to me.'—Act ii. Sc. 2.

¹⁷ i. e. a dress, ornamented with the rich fur of that name, said to be the skin of the sable martin. By the statute of apparel, 24 Hen. VIII. c. 13, it is ordained that none under the degree of an earl may use sables. Bishop, in his *Blossoms*, 1577, speaking of extravagance, says, that a thousand ducates were sometimes given for a face of *sables*. But Hamlet meant to use the word equivocally.

¹⁸ The *hobby-horse*, whose omission in the morris dance is so pathetically lamented in many of our old dramas, in the very words which Hamlet calls his epitaph, was long a distinguished favourite in the May Games. He was driven from his station by the Puritans, as an impious and Pagan superstition; but restored after the promulgation of the Book of Sports. The *hobby-horse* was formed of a pasteboard horse's head, and probably a light frame made of wicker-work to form the hinder parts; this was fastened round the body of a man, and covered with a footcloth, which nearly reached the ground, and concealed the legs of the performer; who displayed his antic equestrian skill, and performed various juggling tricks, *wigh-hie-ing* or neighing, to the no small delight of the bystanders.

Trumpets sound. The Dumb Show¹⁹ follows.

Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly: the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers; she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a Fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner woos the Queen with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile; but, in the end, accepts his love. [Exeunt.

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching malicho²⁰; it means mischief.

Oph. Belike, this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

¹⁹ This dumb show appears to be superfluous, and even incongruous; for as the murder is there circumstantially represented, the King ought to have been struck with it then, without waiting for the dialogue.

²⁰ *Miching malicho* is lurking mischief, or evil doing. To *mich*, for to skulk, to lurk, was an old English verb in common use in Shakspeare's time; and *malicho* or *malhecho*, *misdeed*, he has borrowed from the Spanish. Many stray words of Spanish and Italian were then affectedly used in common conversation, as we have seen French used in more recent times. The quarto spells the word *mallico*. Our ancestors were not particular in orthography, and often spelt according to the ear.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you'll show him:
Be not you ashamed to show, he'll not shame to
tell you what it means²¹.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught; I'll mark
the play.

Pro. *For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.*

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord,

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter a King and a Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart²²
gone round

Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orb'd ground;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen,
About the world have times twelve thirties been;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

²¹ The conversation with Ophelia, as Steevens remarks, cannot fail to disgust every modern reader. It was no doubt such as was current in society in that age, which had not yet learnt to throw a veil of decency over corrupt manners. Yet still I think that such discourse would not have been put into the mouth of Hamlet by the poet, had he not meant it to mark the feigned madness of Hamlet the stronger from its inconsistency with his character as a prince and polished gentleman.

²² *Cart*, car, or chariot, were used indiscriminately for any carriage formerly. Mr. Todd has adduced the following passage from the Comical History of Alphonsus, by R. G. 1599, which, he thinks, Shakspeare meant to burlesque:—

'Thrice ten times Phœbus with his golden beames
Hath compassed the circle of the skie;
Thrice ten times Ceres hath her workemen hir'd,
And fill'd her barnes with fruteful crops of corne,
Since first in priesthood I did lead my life.'

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon

Make us again count o'er, ere love be done!
 But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
 So far from cheer, and from your former state,
 That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
 Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must:
 For women fear too much, even as they love²³;
 And women's fear and love hold quantity;
 In neither aught, or in extremity.
 Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
 And as my love is siz'd²⁴, my fear is so.
 Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
 Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

P. King. 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;

My operant²⁵ powers their functions leave to do;
 And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
 Honour'd, belov'd; and, haply, one as kind
 For husband shalt thou——

P. Queen. O, confound the rest!

Such love must needs be treason in my breast;
 In second husband let me be accurst!
 None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

Ham. That's wormwood.

P. Queen. The instances²⁶, that second marriage move,

Are base respects of thrift, but none of love;

²³ This line is omitted in the folio. There appears to have been a line omitted in the quarto which should have rhymed to this.

²⁴ Cleopatra expresses herself much in the same manner for the loss of Antony:—

'——— our size of sorrow

Proportion'd to our cause, must be as great

As that which makes it.'

²⁵ i. e. active.

²⁶ Instances are motives. See note on King Richard III. Act iii. Sc. 2, p. 78.

A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.

P. King. I do believe, you think what now you
speak;

But, what we do determine oft we break.

Purpose is but the slave to memory²⁷;

Of violent birth, but poor validity:

Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;

But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.

Most necessary 'tis, that we forget

To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:

What to ourselves in passion we propose,

The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.

The violence of either grief or joy

Their own enactures²⁸ with themselves destroy;

Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;

Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.

This world is not for aye; nor 'tis not strange,

That even our loves should with our fortunes change;

For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,

Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.

The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;

The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies.

And hitherto doth love on fortune tend:

For who not needs, shall never lack a friend;

And who in want a hollow friend doth try,

Directly seasons²⁹ him his enemy.

But, orderly to end where I begun,—

Our wills and fates, do so contrary run,

²⁷ 'But thought's the slave of life.'—*King Henry IV.* Part 1.

²⁸ i. e. their own *determinations*, what they *enact*.

²⁹ See note on Act i. Sc. 3, p. 183. 'This quaint phrase (says Steevens), *infests* almost every ancient English composition.' Why *infests*? Surely it is as forcible and intelligible as many other metaphorical expressions retained in the language. It has been remarked that our ancestors were much better judges of the powers of language than we are. The Latin writers did not scruple to apply their verb *condire* in the same manner.

That our devices still are overthrown;
 Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:
 So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
 But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven.
 light!

Sport and repose lock from me, day, and night!
 To desperation turn my trust and hope!
 An anchor's³⁰ cheer in prison be my scope!
 Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,
 Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
 Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,
 If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now,—— [*To OPH.*

P. King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me
 here a while;

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
 The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

P. Queen. Sleep rook thy brain;

And never come mischance between us twain!

[*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there
 no offence in't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest;
 no offence i'the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The mouse-trap³¹. Marry, how? Tropi-

³⁰ *Anchor's* for *anchoret's*. Thus in Hall's second Satire,
 b. iv.:—

'Sit seven years pining in an *anchor's cheyre*,
 To win some patched shreds of minivere.'

³¹ [The mouse-trap,] i. e.

'_____ the thing

In which he'll catch the conscience of the king.'

cally³². This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name³³, his wife, Baptista: you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work: But what of that? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not: Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.—

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus³⁴, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning, to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse.

Ham. So you mistake³⁵ your husbands.—Begin,

³² First quarto—*trapically*. It is evident that a pun was intended.

³³ [Gonzago is the *duke's* name, his wife *Baptista*:] all the old copies read thus. Yet in the dumb show we have, 'Enter a King and Queen;' and at the end of this speech, 'Lucianus, nephew to the king.' This seeming inconsistency, however, may be reconciled. Though the interlude is the *image* of the murder of the *duke* of Vienna, or in other words founded upon that story, the poet might make the principal person in *his fable* a *king*. *Baptista* is never used singly by the Italians, being uniformly compounded with *Giam* and *Giovanni*. It is needless to remark that it is always the name of a man.

³⁴ The use to which Shakspeare put the *chorus* may be seen in King Henry V. Every motion or puppet-show was accompanied by an *interpreter* or showman. Thus in The Two Gentlemen of Verona:—

'O excellent *motion*: O exceeding puppet!

Now will he *interpret* for her.'

³⁵ The first quarto—'So you *must take* your husband.' Hamlet puns upon the word *mistake*: 'So you *mis-take*, or *take* your husbands *amiss* for better and worse.' The word was often thus misused for any thing done wrongfully, and even for privy stealing. In one of Bastard's Epigrams, 1598, cited by Steevens—

'—— none that seeth her face and making
Will judge her stol'n but by *mistaking*.'

murderer;—leave thy damnable faces, and begin.
Come;—

—— The croaking raven
Doth bellow for revenge.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and
time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds³⁶ collected,
With Hecat's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magick and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the Poison into the Sleeper's Ears.*]

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and written in very choice Italian: You shall see anon, how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What! frightened with false fire!

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light:—away!

Pol. Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all but HAMLET and HORATIO.*]

Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep³⁷,

The hart ungalled play:

For some must watch, while some must sleep;

Thus runs the world away.—

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk³⁸ with me), with two

³⁶ 'Midnight weeds.' Thus in *Macbeth*:—

'Root of hemlock, digg'd i' the dark.'

³⁷ See note on *As You Like It*, Act ii. Sc. 1, p. 130.

³⁸ To *turn Turk* was a familiar phrase for any violent change of condition or character.

provincial roses on my razed³⁹ shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry⁴⁰ of players, sir?

Hor. Half a share⁴¹.

Ham. A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very—peacock⁴².

Hor. You might have rhymed.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning,——

³⁹ [*Provincial roses*] on my *razed shoes*. *Provincial* was erroneously changed to *Provençal*, at the suggestion of Warton. Mr. Douce rectified the error by showing that the *Provincial* roses took their name from *Provins*, in Lower Brie, and not from *Provence*. *Razed shoes* are most probably *embroidered shoes*. The quarto reads, *rac'd*. To *race*, or *rase*, was to *stripe*.

⁴⁰ [*A cry of players*.] It was usual to call a *pack* of hounds a *cry*; from the French *meute de chiens*: it is here humorously applied to a *troop* or *company* of players. It is used again in *Coriolanus*: Menenius says to the citizens, 'You have made good work, you and your *cry*.' In the very curious catalogue of The Companies of Bestys, given in The Boke of St. Albans, many equally singular terms may be found, which seem to have exercised the wit and ingenuity of our ancestors; as a *thraue* of thrashers, a *scull* or *shoal* of monks, &c.

⁴¹ The players were paid not by salaries, but by *shares* or portions of the profit, according to merit. See Malone's Account of the Ancient Theatres, *passim*.

⁴² [*A very, very—peacock*.] The old copies read *paiock*, and *paiocke*. The *peacock* was as proverbially used for a *proud fool* as the *lapwing* for a silly one. 'Pavoneggiare, to court it, to brave it, to *peacockise* it, to wantonise it, to get up and down fondly, gazing upon himself as a peacocke does.'—*Florio, Ital. Dict.* 1598. Theobald proposed to read *paddock*; and in the last scene Hamlet bestows this opprobrious name upon the king. Mr. Blakeway has suggested that we might read *puttock*, which means a base degenerate hawk, a kite; which Shakspeare does indeed contrast with the eagle in *Cymbeline*, Act i. Sc. 2:—

'I chose an eagle, and did avoid a *puttock*.'

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha!—Come, some musick; come, the recorders⁴³.—

For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike,—he likes it not, perdy⁴⁴.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Come, some musick.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir,——

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is, in his retirement, marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer, to signify this to the doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir:—pronounce.

Guil. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's com-

⁴³ [The recorders.] See note on a *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act i. Sc. 1. It is difficult to settle exactly the form of this instrument: old writers in general make no distinction between a flute, a pipe, and a recorder; but Hawkins has shown clearly, from a passage in Lord Bacon's *Natural History*, that the flute and the recorder were distinct instruments.

⁴⁴ *Perdy* is a corruption of the French *par Dieu*.

mandment: if not, your pardon, and my return shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: But, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter; My mother, you say,——

Ros. Then thus she says: Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother!—But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, but bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but *While the grass grows*,—the proverb is something musty.

Enter the Players, with Recorders.

O, the recorders:—let me see one.—To withdraw with you⁴⁵.—Why do you go about to recover the

⁴⁵ 'To withdraw with you.' Malone added here a stage direction [*Taking Guild. aside.*] Steevens thinks it an answer to

wind of me⁴⁶, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly⁴⁷.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages⁴⁸ with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent musick. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me? You would play upon me;

a motion Guildenstern had used, for Hamlet to withdraw with him. I think that it means no more than 'to draw back with you,' to leave that scent or trail. It is a hunting term, like that which follows.

⁴⁶ 'To recover the wind of me.' This is a term which has been left unexplained. It is borrowed from hunting, as the context shows; and means, to take advantage of the animal pursued, by getting to the windward of it, that it may not scent its pursuers. 'Observe how the wind is, that you may set the net so as the hare and wind may come together; if the wind be sideways it may do well enough, but never if it blow over the net into the hare's face, for he will scent both it and you at a distance.'—*Gentleman's Recreation*.

⁴⁷ Hamlet may say with propriety, 'I do not well understand that.' Perhaps Guildenstern means, 'If my duty to the king makes me too bold, my love to you makes me importunate even to rudeness.'

⁴⁸ The *ventages* are the holes of the pipe. The *stops* means the mode of stopping those ventages to produce notes. Malone has made it the 'sounds produced.' Thus in King Henry V. Prologue:—

'Rumour is a pipe———

And of so easy and so plain a stop.'

you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much musick, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think, I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir!

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by and by.—They fool me to the top of my bent⁴⁹.—I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so. *[Exit* POLONIUS.

Ham. By and by is easily said.—Leave me, friends. *[Exeunt* ROS. GUIL. HOR, &c.

'Tis now the very witching time of night;
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: Now could I drink hot
blood,

And do such bitter business as the day⁵⁰
Would quake to look on. Soft; now to my mother,—

⁴⁹ See note on Act ii. So. 2.

⁵⁰ The quarto reads:—

'And do such business as the bitter day,' &c.

O, heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
 The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
 Let me be cruel, not unnatural:
 I will speak daggers to her⁵¹, but use none;
 My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:
 How in my words soever she be shent⁵²,
 To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [*Exit.*]

SCENE III. *A Room in the same.*

Enter King, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,
 To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you;
 I your commission will forthwith despatch,
 And he to England shall along with you:
 The terms of our estate may not endure
 Hazard so near us, as doth hourly grow
 Out of his lunacies.

Guil. We will ourselves provide:
 Most holy and religious fear it is,
 To keep those many many bodies safe,
 That live, and feed, upon your majesty.

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
 With all the strength and armour of the mind,
 To keep itself from 'noyance; but much more
 That spirit, upon whose weal¹ depend and rest

⁵¹ 'They are pestilent fellows, they *speak nothing but bodkins.*'
 —*Return from Parnassus.* In the *Aulularia* of Plautus a phrase
 not less singular occurs:—

'*Me. Quia mitri miseri cerebrum excutiant,
 Tua dicta soror: lapides loqueris.*' Act ii. Sc. 1.

⁵² To *shend* is to *injure*, whether by reproof, blows, or other-
 wise. Shakspeare generally uses *shent* for reproof, threatened
 with angry words. 'To give his words *seals*' is therefore to
 carry his punishment beyond *reproof*. The allusion is the seal-
 ing a deed to render it effective. The quarto of 1603:—

'I will speak daggers; those sharp words being spent,
 To do her wrong my soul shall ne'er consent.'

¹ Folio reads '*spirits.*'

The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What's near it, with it: it is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boist'rous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon² this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros. Guil.

We will haste us.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUIL.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet.
Behind the arras³ I'll convey myself,
To hear the process; I'll warrant, she'll tax him
home;

And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet, that some more audience, than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial⁴, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage⁵. Fare you well, my liege;
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King.

Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;

² Quarto—'about.'

³ See King Henry IV. Part I. Act ii. Sc. 4.

⁴ '——— Matres omnes filiis

In peccato adjutrices, auxilii in paterna injuria

Solent esse'——

Ter. Heaut. Act v. Sc. 2.

⁵ Warburton explains of *vantage*, 'by some opportunity of secret observation.' I incline to think that 'of *vantage*,' in Shakspeare's language, is for advantage, *commodi causa*.

It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder!—Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will⁶;
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood?
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens,
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer, but this two-fold force,—
To be forestalled, ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd, being down? Then I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder!—
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardon'd, and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world,
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: But 'tis not so above:
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature: and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: What can it not?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O limed⁷ soul; that struggling to be free,
Art more engag'd! Help, angels, make assay!

⁶ i. e. 'though I was not only willing, but strongly inclined to pray, my guilt prevented me.'

⁷ i. e. caught as with birdlime.

Bow, stubborn knees! and, heart, with strings of steel,

Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe;

All may be well!

[*Retires and kneels.*]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying;
And now I'll do't; and so he goes to heaven:
And so am I reveng'd? That would be scann'd⁸:
A villain kills my father; and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

Why, this is hire and salary⁹, not revenge.
He took my father grossly full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
And, how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven?
But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him: And am I then reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No.

Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent¹⁰:
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;
Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed;
At gaming, swearing; or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't:
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven:
And that his soul may be as damn'd, and black,
As hell, whereto it goes¹¹. My mother stays:
This physick but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*]

⁸ 'That would be scann'd'—that requires consideration, or ought to be estimated.

⁹ The quarto reads, *base* and *silly*.

¹⁰ Shakspeare has used the verb to *hent*, to take, to lay hold on, elsewhere; but the word is here used as a substantive, for *hold* or *opportunity*.

¹¹ Johnson has justly exclaimed against the horrible nature

The King rises and advances.

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below :

Words, without thoughts, never to heaven go ¹².

[Exit.]

SCENE IV. *Another Room in the same.*

Enter Queen and POLONIUS.

Pol. He will come straight. Look, you lay home to him :

Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear with ;
And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between

Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here.

'Pray you, be round with him ¹.

Queen.

I'll warrant you ;

Fear me not:—withdraw, I hear him coming.

[POLONIUS hides himself.]

of this desperate revenge ; but the quotations of the commentators from other plays cotemporary with and succeeding this, show that it could not have been so horrifying to the ears of our ancestors. In times of less civilisation, revenge was held almost a sacred duty ; and the purpose of the appearance of the ghost in this play is chiefly to excite Hamlet to it. The more fell and terrible the retributive act, the more meritorious it seems to have been held. The King himself in a future scene, when stimulating Laertes to kill Hamlet, says, ' Revenge should have no bounds.' Mason has observed that, horrid as this resolution of Hamlet's is, ' yet some moral may be extracted from it, as all his subsequent misfortunes were owing to this savage refinement of revenge.'

¹² First quarto:—

' No king on earth is safe, if God's his foe.'

¹ The folio here interposes the following speech:—

' *Ham.* [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother.'

The circumstance of Polonius hiding himself behind the arras and the manner of his death are found in the old black letter prose *Hystory of Hamblett*.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother; what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet?

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And,—'would it were not so!—you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;
You go not, till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?

Help, help, ho!

Pol. [Behind.] What, ho! help!

Ham. How now! a rat?
[*Draws.*

Dead, for a ducat, dead.

[*HAMLET makes a pass through the Arras.*

Pol. [Behind.] O, I am slain.

[*Falls, and dies.*

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not:
Is it the king?

[*Lifts up the Arras, and draws forth POLO-
NIUS.*

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this !

Ham. A bloody deed ; almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother².

Queen. As kill a king !

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell !

[To POLONIUS.

I took thee for thy better ; take thy fortune :
Thou find'st to be too busy, is some danger.—
Leave wringing of your hands ; Peace ; sit you down,
And let me wring your heart : for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff :
If damned custom have not braz'd it so,
That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag
thy tongue
In noise so rude against me ?

Ham. Such an act,
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty ;
Calls virtue, hypocrite ; takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there³ ; makes marriage vows

² There is an idle and verbose controversy between Steevens and Malone, whether the poet meant to represent the Queen as guilty or innocent of being accessory to the murder of her husband. Surely there can be no doubt upon the matter. The Queen shows no emotion at the mock play when it is said—

' In second husband let me be accurst,

None wed the second but who kill'd the first'—

and now manifests the surprise of conscious innocence upon the subject. It should also be observed that Hamlet never directly accuses her of any guilty participation in that crime. I am happy to find my opinion, so expressed in December, 1823, confirmed by the newly discovered quarto copy of 1603 ; in which the Queen in a future speech is made to say—

' But, as I have a soul, I swear by heaven,
I never knew of this most horrid murder.'

³ ' ————— takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love,' &c.

One would think by the ludicrous gravity with which Steevens

As false as dicers' oaths : O, such a deed
 As from the body of contraction plucks
 The very soul ; and sweet religion makes
 A rhapsody of words : Heaven's face doth glow ;
 Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
 With tristful visage, as against the doom,
 Is thought-sick at the act⁴.

Queen. Ah me, what act,
 That roars so loud, and thunders in the index⁵?

Ham. Look here upon this picture, and on this ;
 The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
 See, what a grace was seated on this brow :
 Hyperion's curls ; the front of Jove himself ;
 An eye like Mars, to threaten and command ;
 A station⁶ like the herald Mercury,
 New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill ;
 A combination, and a form, indeed,

and Malone take this figurative expression in a literal sense, that they were unused to the language of poetry, especially to the adventurous metaphors of Shakspeare. Mr. Boswell's note is short and to the purpose. '*Rose* is put generally for the ornament, the grace of an innocent love.' Ophelia describes Hamlet as—

'The expectancy and *rose* of the fair state.'

⁴ The quarto of 1604 gives this passage thus :—

'———— Heaven's face does glow
 O'er this solidity and compound mass
 With *heated* visage, as against the doom,
 Is thought-sick at the act.'

⁵ The *index*, or table of contents, was formerly placed at the beginning of books. In Othello, Act ii. Sc. 7, we have—'an *index* and obscure *prologue* to the history of foul and lustful thoughts.'

⁶ It is evident from this passage that whole length pictures of the two kings were formerly introduced. *Station* does not mean the spot where any one is placed, but the *act of standing*, the *attitude*. So in Antony and Cleopatra, Act iii. Sc. 3 :—

'Her motion and her *station* are as one.'

Without this explanation it might be conceived that the compliment designed for the attitude of the King was bestowed on the place where Mercury is represented as standing.

Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man :
This was your husband.—Look you now, what follows :

Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother⁷. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten⁸ on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it, love: for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment; And what judgment
Would step from this to this? [Sense⁹, sure you have,
Else could you not have motion: But, sure, that sense
Is apoplex'd: for madness would not err;
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd,
But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference.] What devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind¹⁰?
[Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope¹¹.]
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,

⁷ Here the allusion is to Pharaoh's dream. Genesis, xli.

⁸ i. e. to feed rankly or grossly: it is usually applied to the fattening of animals. Marlowe has it for 'to grow fat.' *Bat* is the old word for *increase*; whence we have *battle*, *batten*, *batful*.

⁹ *Sense* here is not used for *reason*; but for *sensation*, *feeling*, or *perception*: as before in this scene:—

'That it be proof and bulwark against *sense*.'

Warburton, misunderstanding the passage, proposed to read *notion* instead of *motion*. The whole passage in brackets is omitted in the folio.

¹⁰ 'The hoodwinke play, or *hoodman blind*, in some place, called *blindmanbuf*.'—*Baret*. It appears also to have been called *blind hob*. It is *hob-man blind* in the quarto of 1603.

¹¹ i. e. could not be so *dull and stupid*.

If thou canst mutine¹² in a matron's bones,
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
 And melt in her own fire¹³; proclaim no shame,
 When the compulsive ardour gives the charge;
 Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
 And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more:
 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
 And there I see such black and grained¹⁴ spots
 As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
 In the rank sweat of an enseamed¹⁵ bed;
 Stew'd in corruption; honeying, and making love
 Over the nasty sty;—

Queen. O, speak to me no more;
 These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears:
 No more, sweet Hamlet.

Ham. A murderer, and a villain;
 A slave, that is not twentieth part the tithe

¹² *Mutine* for *mutiny*. This is the old form of the verb. Shakespeare calls *mutineers mutines* in a subsequent scene; but this is, I believe, peculiar to him: they were called *mutiners* anciently.

¹³ Thus in the quarto of 1603:—

‘Why appetite with you is in the wane,
 Your blood runs backward now from whence it came:
 Who'll chide hot blood within a virgin's heart
 When lust shall dwell within a matron's breast.’

¹⁴ ‘Grained spots;’ that is, dyed in *grain*, deeply imbued.

¹⁵ i. e. greasy, rank, gross. It is a term borrowed from falconry. It is well known that the *seam* of any animal was the fat or tallow; and a hawk was said to be *enseamed* when she was too fat or gross for flight. By some confusion of terms, however, ‘to *enseam* a hawk’ was used for ‘to purge her of glut and grease;’ by analogy it should have been *unseam*. Beaumont and Fletcher, in *The False One*, use *inseamed* in the same manner:—

‘His lechery *inseamed* upon him.’

It should be remarked, that the quarto of 1603 reads *incestuous*; as does that of 1611.

Of your precedent lord:—a vice¹⁶ of kings :
 A cutpurse of the empire and the rule ;
 That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
 And put it in his pocket !

Queen.

No more.

*Enter Ghost*¹⁷.

Ham.

A king

Of shreds and patches :—
 Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
 You heavenly guards !—What would your gracious
 figure ?

Queen. Alas, he's mad.

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
 That, laps'd in time and passion¹⁸, lets go by
 The important acting of your dread command ?
 O, say !

Ghost. Do not forget: This visitation
 Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
 But, look ! amazement on thy mother sits :
 O, step between her and her fighting soul ;
 Conceit¹⁹ in weakest bodies strongest works ;
 Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham.

How is it with you, lady ?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you ?

¹⁶ i. e. ' the low mimic, the counterfeit, a dizard, or common vice and jester, counterfeiting the gestures of any man.'—*Fleming*. Shakspeare afterwards calls him a *king of shreds and patches*, alluding to the party-coloured habit of the vice or fool in a play.

¹⁷ The first quarto adds, ' in his night-gown.'

¹⁸ ' Laps'd in time and passion.' Johnson explains this—' That having suffered *time* to *slip* and *passion* to *cool*, let's go by,' &c. This explanation is confirmed by the quarto of 1603 :

' Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
 That I thus long have let revenge slip by.'

¹⁹ *Conceit* for *conception*, *imagination*. This was the force of the word among our ancestors. Thus in *The Rape of Lucrece* :
 ' And the conceited painter was so nice.'

That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
 And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
 Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
 And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
 Your bedded hair, like life in excrements²⁰,
 Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,
 Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
 Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him! on him!—Look you, how pale
 he glares!

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
 Would make them capable²¹.—Do not look upon me;
 Lest, with this piteous action, you convert
 My stern affects²²: then what I have to do
 Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

²⁰ 'The hair is excrementitious; that is, without life or sensation; yet those very hairs, as if they had life, start up,' &c. So Macbeth:—

' ————— my fell of *hair*
 Would at a dismal treatise *rouse* and *stir*
 As life were in't.'

²¹ *Capable* for *susceptible, intelligent*, i. e. would excite in them capacity to understand. Thus in King Richard III.:—

' ——— O 'tis a parlous boy,
 Bold, quick, ingenious, forward, *capable*.'

²² 'My stern *affects*.' All former editions read—'My stern *effects*.' *Effects*, for actions, deeds, effected,' says Malone! We should certainly read *affects*, i. e. dispositions, affections of the mind: as in that disputed passage of Othello:—'the young *affects* in me defunct.'

It is remarkable that we have the same error in Measure for Measure, Act iii. Sc. 1, p. 49:—

' ————— Thou art not certain,
 For thy complexion shifts to strange *effects*
 After the moon.'

Dr. Johnson saw the error in that play, and proposed to read *affects*. But the present passage has escaped observation. The 'piteous action' of the ghost could not alter things already *effected*, but might move Hamlet to a less stern mood of mind.

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all, that is, I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing, but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!

My father, in his habit as he liv'd!

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[*Exit Ghost.*

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:

This bodiless creation ecstasy²³

Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful musick: It is not madness,

That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,

And I the matter will reword; which madness

Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,

Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,

That not your trespass, but my madness speaks:

It will but skin and film the ulcerous place;

Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,

Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;

Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;

And do not spread the compost²⁴ on the weeds,

To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue:

For in the fatness of these pursy times,

²³ See p. 175, note 6, and *The Tempest*, vol. i. p. 67. This speech of the queen has the following remarkable variation in the quarto of 1603:—

'Alas, it is the weakness of thy brain

Which makes thy tongue to blazon thy heart's grief:

But as I have a soul, I swear to heaven,

I never knew of this most horrid murder:

But, Hamlet, this is only fantasy,

And for my love forget these idle fits.'

²⁴ 'Do not by any new indulgence heighten your former offences.'

Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg :
Yea, curb²⁵ and woo, for leave to do him good.

Queen. O, Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night : but go not to my uncle's bed ;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
[That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this²⁶ ;
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,
That aptly is put on :] Refrain to-night²⁷ ;
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence : [²⁸the next more easy :

²⁵ i. e. *bow*. ' Courber, Fr. to bow, crook, or curb.' Thus in *Pierce Plowman* :—

' Then I *courbid* on my knees.'

²⁶ ' That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this,' &c.

This passage, which is not in the folio, has been thought corrupt. Dr. Thirlby proposed to read, ' Of habits *evil*.' Steevens would read, ' Or habits' devil.' It is evident that there is an intended opposition between *angel* and *devil*; but the passage will perhaps bear explaining as it stands:—' That monster custom, who devours all sense (feeling, or perception) of *devilish habits*, is angel yet in this,' &c. This passage might perhaps have been as well omitted after the example of the editors of the folio ; but, I presume, it has been retained upon the principle which every where guide the editors, ' To lose no drop of that immortal man.'

²⁷ Here the quarto of 1603 has two remarkable lines:—

' And, mother, but assist me in revenge,
And in his death your infamy shall die.'

²⁸ [The next more easy, &c.] This passage, as far as *potency*, is also omitted in the folio. In the line:—

' And either quell the devil, or throw him out.'

The word QUELL is wanting in the old copy. Malone inserted the word *curb*, because he found, in *The Merchant of Venice*, ' And curb this cruel *devil* of his will.' But the occurrence of *curb* in so opposite a sense just before is against his emendation.

For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
 And either quell the devil or throw him out
 With wondrous potency.] Once more, good night!
 And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
 I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,

[*Pointing to POLONIUS.*

I do repent: But heaven hath pleas'd it so,—
 'To punish me with this, and this with me'²⁹,
 That I must be their scourge and minister.
 I will bestow him, and will answer well
 The death I gave him. So, again, good night!—
 I must be cruel, only to be kind:
 Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.—
 But one word more, good lady.

Queen.

What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
 Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
 Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you, his mouse³⁰;
 And let him, for a pair of reechy³¹ kisses,
 Or padding in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
 Make you to ravel all this matter out,
 That I essentially am not in madness,
 But mad in craft³². 'Twere good, you let him know;
 For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
 Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib³³,

²⁹ 'To punish me by making me the instrument of this man's death, and to punish this man by my hand.'

³⁰ *Mouse*, a term of endearment formerly. Thus Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*:—'Pleasant names may be invented, bird, mouse, lamb, puss, pigeon,' &c.

³¹ i. e. *reeky* or fumant; reekant, as Florio calls it. The king has been already called the *bloat* king, which hints at his intemperance. In *Coriolanus* we have the *reechy* neck of a kitchen wench. *Reeky* and *reechy* are the same word, and always applied to any vaporous exhalation, even to the fumes of a dunghill.

³² The hint for Hamlet's feigned madness is taken from the old *Historie of Hamblett* already mentioned.

³³ For *paddock*, a *toad*, see *Macbeth*, Act i. Sc. 1: and for *gib*, a *cat*, see *King Henry IV.* Part I. Act i. Sc. 2.

Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
 No, in despite of sense, and secrecy,
 Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
 Let the birds fly; and, like the famous ape,
 To try conclusions³⁴, in the basket creep,
 And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of
 breath,
 And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
 What thou hast said to me³⁵.

Ham. I must to England³⁶; you know that?

Queen. Alack,
 I had forgot; 'tis so concluded on.

Ham. [There's letters seal'd: and my two school-
 fellows³⁷,—
 Whom I will trust, as I will adders fang'd,—
 They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
 And marshal me to knavery: Let it work;
 For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer
 Hoist with his own petar³⁸: and it shall go hard,

³⁴ *To try conclusions* is to put to proof, or try experiments. See Merchant of Venice, Act ii. Sc. 2. Sir John Suckling possibly alludes to the same story in one of his letters:—'It is the story after all of the jackanapes and the partridges; thou starest after a beauty till it be lost to thee, and then let'st out another, and starest after that till it is gone too.'

³⁵ The quarto of 1603 has here another remarkable variation:—

'Hamlet, I vow by that Majesty
 That knows our thoughts and looks into our hearts,
 I will conceal, consent, and do my best,
 What stratagem soe'er thou shalt devise.'

³⁶ The manner in which Hamlet came to know that he was to be sent to England is not developed. He expresses surprise when the king mentions it in a future scene; but his design of passing for a madman may account for this.

³⁷ This and the eight following verses are omitted in the folio.

³⁸ *Hoist with his own petar.* *Hoist* for *hoised*. *To hoyse* was the old verb. A petar was a kind of mortar used to blow up gates.

But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon: O, 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.—]

This man shall set me packing.

I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room³⁹:

Mother, good night.—Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.

Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you:—
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally; HAMLET dragging in
POLONIUS.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The same.*

*Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUIL-
DENSTERN.*

King. There's matter in these sighs; these profound
heaves:

You must translate: 'tis fit we understand them:
Where is your son?

³⁹ It must be confessed that this is coarse language for a prince under any circumstances, and such as is not called for by the occasion. But Hamlet has purposely chosen gross expressions and coarse metaphors throughout the interview with his mother, perhaps to make his appeal to her feelings the more forcible. Something may be said in extenuation. The word *guts* was not anciently so offensive to delicacy as it is at present; the courtly Lyly has used it in his *Mydas*, 1592. Stanyhurst often in his translation of Virgil, and Chapman in his version of the sixth *Iliad*:—

‘ ——— in whose *guts* the king of men imprest
His ashen lance.’

In short, *guts* was used where we now use *entrails*.

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while¹.—
 [To ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN,
who go out.

Ah², my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea, and wind, when both
 contend³

Which is the mightier: In his lawless fit,
 Behind the arras hearing something stir,
 Whips out his rapier, cries, *A rat! a rat!*
 And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
 The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!
 It had been so with us, had we been there:
 His liberty is full of threats to all;
 To you yourself, to us, to every one.
 Alas! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
 It will be laid to us, whose providence
 Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt⁴,
 This mad young man: but, so much was our love,
 We would not understand what was most fit;
 But, like the owner of a foul disease,
 To keep it from divulging, let it feed
 Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd:
 O'er whom his very madness, like some ore,

¹ This line does not appear in the folio, in which Guildenstern and Rosencrantz are not brought on the stage at all.

² Quarto—Ah, *mine own* lord.

³ Thus in Lear:—

‘——— he was met e'en now
As mad as the vex'd sea.'

⁴ Out of *haunt* means out of company. ‘*Frequentia*, a great *haunt* or company of folk.’ Thus in Antony and Cleopatra:—

‘Dido and her Sichæus shall want troops,
 And all the *haunt* be ours.’

And in Romeo and Juliet:—

‘We talk here in the public *haunt* of men.’

Among a mineral⁵ of metals basé,
Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

King. O, Gertrude, come away!

The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse.—Ho! Guildenstern!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him:
Go, seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[*Exeunt ROS. and GUIL.*

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done: [so, haply, slander,—
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank⁶,
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air⁷.]—O, come away!
My soul is full of discord, and dismay. [*Exeunt.*

⁵ Shakspeare, with a licence not unusual among his cotemporaries, uses *ore* for *gold*, and *mineral* for *mine*. Bullokar and Bleunt both define 'or or ore, gold; of a golden colour.' And the Cambridge Dictionary, 1594, under the Latin word *mineralia*, will show how the English *mineral* came to be used for a mine. Thus also in The Golden Remaines of Hales of Eton, 1693:—
'Controversies of the times, like spirits in the *minerals*, with all their labour nothing is done.'

⁶ The *blank* was the *mark* at which shots or arrows were directed. Thus in The Winter's Tale, Act ii. Sc. 3:—

'Out of the *blank* and *level* of my aim.'

⁷ The passage in brackets is not in the folio. The words 'So haply slander' are also omitted in the quartos; they were supplied by Theobald. The addition is supported by a passage in Cymbeline:—

'————— No, 'tis slander,

SCENE II. *Another Room in the same.**Enter HAMLET.*

Ham. ———Safely stowed,—[*Ros. &c. within.*
Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!]
But soft¹!—what noise?
who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the
dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis; that we may take it thence,
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not
mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!
—what replication should be made by the son of a
king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's counte-
nance, his rewards, his authorities². But such offi-
cers do the king best service in the end: He keeps
them, like an ape doth nuts³, in the corner of his
jaw; first mouthed to be last swallowed: When he

Whose edge is sharper than the sword, whose tongue
Out-venoms all the worms of Nile, whose breath
Rides on the posting winds, and doth bely
All corners of the world.'

¹ 'But soft,' these two words are not in the folio.

² Here the quarto 1603 inserts 'that makes his liberality
your storehouse, but,' &c.

³ The omission of the words '*doth nuts*,' in the old copies, had
obscured this passage. Dr. Farmer proposed to read 'like an
ape an *apple*.' The words are now supplied from the newly dis-
covered quarto of 1603.

needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again ⁴.

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

Ham. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body ⁵. The king is a thing——

Guil. A thing, my lord?

Ham. Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after ⁶. [Exeunt.

SCENE III. *Another Room in the same.*

Enter King, attended.

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.

How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose !
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And, where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem

⁴ 'He's but a *sponge*, and shortly needs must leese,
His wrong got juice, when greatness' fist shall *squeeze*
His liquor out.' *Marston, Sat. vii.*

⁵ Hamlet affects obscurity. His meaning may be 'The king is a *body* without a *kingly soul*, a thing—of nothing.' Johnson would have altered 'Of nothing' to *Or* nothing; but Steevens and Farmer, by their superior acquaintance with our elder writers, soon clearly showed, by several examples, that the text was right.

⁶ 'Hide fox, and all after.' This was a juvenile sport, most probably what is now called *hoop*, or *hide and seek*; in which one child hides himself, and the rest run *all after*, seeking him. The words are not in the *quarto*.

Deliberate pause : Diseases, desperate grown,
By desperate appliance are relieved,

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

Or not at all.—How now? what hath befallen?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your
pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper? Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten:
a certain convocation of politick worms are e'en at
him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we
fat all creatures else, to fat us; and we fat ourselves
for maggots; Your fat king, and your lean beggar,
is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table;
that's the end.

[*King.* Alas, alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath
eat of a king; and eat of the fish that hath fed of
that worm¹.]

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing, but to show you how a king may
go a progress² through the guts of a beggar.

¹ Alas, Alas! This speech, and the following one of Hamlet,
are omitted in the folio.

² A *progress* is a *journey*. Steevens says 'it alludes to the
royal journies of state, always styled progresses.' This was
probably in Shakspeare's mind, for the word was certainly ap-
plied to those periodical journeys of the sovereign to visit their

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i'the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there. [*To some Attendants.*

Ham. He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—

Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee
hence

With fiery quickness: Therefore prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help³,
The associates tend⁴, and every thing is bent
For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub, that sees them.—But, come;
for England!—Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: Father and mother is man
and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my
mother. Come, for England. [*Exit.*

noble subjects, but by no means exclusively. Sir William Drury, in a Letter to Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, among the Conway papers, tells him he is going 'a little *progresse* to be merry with his neighbours.' And that popular book of John Bunyan's, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, is surely not the account of a regal 'predatory excursion.'

³ i. e. in modern phrase 'the wind *serves*,' or is right to *aid* or *help* you on your way.

⁴ i. e. attend.

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed
aboard;

Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night;
Away; for every thing is seal'd and done
That else leans on the affair: 'Pray you, make haste.

[*Exeunt ROS. and GUIL.*

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense;
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us,) thou may'st not coldly set⁵
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectick in my blood he rages⁶,
And thou must cure me: Till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys will ne'er begin⁷.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV. A Plain in Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS, and Forces, marching.

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;
Tell him, that, by his licence, Fortinbras
Claims¹ the conveyance of a promis'd march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye².
And let him know so.

⁵ To *set* formerly meant to *estimate*. There is no ellipsis, as Malone supposed. 'To *sette*, or tell the pryce; *æstimare*.' To *set* much or little by a thing, is to *estimate* it much or little.

⁶ 'I would forget her, but a fever she
Reigns in my blood.' *Love's Labour's Lost.*

⁷ The folio reads:—

'Howe'er my *haps*, my joys were ne'er begun.'

¹ The quarto reads—*craves*.

² *Eye* for presence. In the Regulations for the establishment

Cap. I will do't, my lord.

For. Go softly on.

[*Exeunt FORTINBRAS and Forces.*]

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, &c.

[³ *Ham.* Good sir, whose powers are these?

Cap. They are of Norway, sir.

Ham. How purpos'd, sir,

I pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who

Commands them, sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?

Cap. Truly to speak, sir, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground,
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole,
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Cap. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

Ham. Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand
ducats,

Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace;
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.

Cap. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit Captain.*]

of the Queen's Household, 1627:—'All such as doe service in
the queen's eye.' And in The Establishment of Prince Henry's
Household, 1610:—'All such as doe service in the prince's eye.'
It was the formulary for the royal presence.

³ The remainder of this scene is omitted in the folio.

Ros. Will't please you go, my lord?

Ham. I will be with you straight. Go a little before. [Exeunt *Ros.* and *GUIL.*

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good, and market⁴ of his time,
Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, he, that made us with such large discourse⁵,
Looking before, and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To fust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven⁶ scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part
wisdom,

And, ever, three parts coward,—I do not know
Why yet I live to say, *This thing's to do*:
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,
To do't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me:
Witness, this army of such mass, and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince;
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
Makes mouths at the invisible event;

⁴ i. e. profit.

⁵ See note on Act i. Sc. 2, p. 174. It is evident that discursive powers of mind are meant; or, as Johnson explains it, 'such latitude of comprehension, such power of reviewing the past, and anticipating the future.' Since I wrote the former note, I find that Bishop Wilkins makes *ratiocination* and *discourse* convertible terms.

⁶ *Craven* is recreant, cowardly. It may be satisfactorily traced from *crant*, *creant*, the old French word for an act of submission. It is so written in the old metrical romance of Ywaine and Gawaine (Ritson, vol. i. p. 133):—

'Or yelde the til us als *creant*.'

And in Richard Cœur de Lion (Weber, vol. ii. p. 208):—

'On knees he fel down, and cryde, "*Créant*."'

It then became *cravant*, *cravent*, and at length *craven*. It is superfluous to add that recreant is from the same source.

Exposing what is mortal, and unsure,
 To all that fortune, death, and danger, dare,
 Even for an egg shell. Rightly to be great,
 Is, not to stir without great argument;
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
 When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
 Excitements of my reason, and my blood⁷,
 And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
 That, for a fantasy, and trick of fame,
 Go to their graves like beds: fight for a plot⁸
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
 Which is not tomb enough, and continent⁹,
 To hide the slain?—O, from this time forth,
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE V. Elsinore. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter Queen and HORATIO.

Queen. —I will not speak with her.

Hor. She is importunate; indeed, distract;
 Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

⁷ 'Excitements of my reason and my blood.'
 Provocations which excite both my reason and my passions to
 vengeance.

⁸ A plot of ground. Thus in *The Mirror for Magistrates*:—
 'Of ground to win a plot, a while to dwell,
 We venture lives, and send our souls to hell.'

⁹ *Continent* means that which comprehends or encloses. Thus
 in *Lear*:—

'Rive your concealing continents.'
 And in Chapman's version of the third *Iliad*:—
 '_____ did take

Thy fair form for a continent of parts as fair.'
 'If there be no fulnesse, then is the continent greater than the
 content.'—*Bacon's Advancement of Learning*, 1633, p. 7.

Hor. She speaks much of her father; says, she
 hears,
 There's tricks i'the world; and hems, and beats her
 heart;
 Spurns enviously¹ at straws; speaks things in doubt,
 That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
 Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
 The hearers to collection²; they aim³ at it,
 And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;
 Which, as her winks and nods, and gestures yield
 them,
 Indeed would make one think, there might⁴ be
 thought,
 Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily⁵.

Queen. 'Twere good, she were spoken with; for
 she may strew
 Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds:
 Let her come in⁶. [*Exit HORATIO.*]
 To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
 Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss⁷:

¹ *Envy* is often used by Shakspeare and his cotemporaries for *malice, spite, or hatred*:—

'You turn the good we offer into *envy*.'

King Henry VIII.

See *Merchant of Venice*, Act iv. Sc. 1. Indeed '*enviously*, and *spitefully*,' are treated as synonymous by our old writers.

² To *collection*, that is to *gather* or deduce consequences from such premises. Thus in *Cymbeline*, Act v. Sc. 5:—

'————— whose containing
 Is so from sense to hardness, that I can
 Make no *collection* of it.'

See note on that passage.

³ The quartos read—*yawn*. To *aim* is to *guess*.

⁴ Folio—*would*.

⁵ *Unhappily*, that is *mischievously*.

⁶ The three first lines of this speech are given to *Horatio* in the quarto.

⁷ Shakspeare is not singular in his use of *amiss* as a substantive. Several instances are adduced by Steevens, and more by *Mr. Nares* in his *Glossary*. '*Each toy*' is *each trifle*.

So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

*Re-enter HORATIO, with OPHELIA*⁸.

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

Queen. How now, Ophelia?

Oph. *How should I your true love know,
From another one?*

*By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon*⁹. [Singing.

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay; 'pray you, mark.
He is dead and gone, lady, [Sings.

*He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.*

O, ho!

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia,——

Oph. 'Pray you, mark.
White his shroud as the mountain snow.

[Sings.

Enter King.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Oph. *Larded*¹⁰ *all with sweet flowers;*
*Which bewept to the grave*¹¹ *did go,
With true love showers.*

⁸ 'There is no part of this play in its representation on the stage more pathetic than this scene; which, I suppose, proceeds from the utter insensibility Ophelia has to her own misfortunes. A great sensibility, or none at all, seem to produce the same effects. In the latter [case] the audience supply what is wanting, and with the former they sympathize.'—*Sir J. Reynolds.*

⁹ These were the badges of pilgrims. The cockle shell was an emblem of their intention to go beyond sea. The habit being held sacred, was often assumed as a disguise in love adventures. In *The Old Wive's Tale*, by Peele, 1595:—'I will give thee a balmer's staff of ivory, and a scallop shell of beaten gold.'

¹⁰ Garnished.

¹¹ Quarto—ground.

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God'ield¹² you! They say, the owl was a baker's daughter¹³. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. 'Pray, let us have no words of this; but when they ask you, what it means, say you this:

*Good morrow, 'tis Saint Valentine's day¹⁴,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine:*

¹² See Macbeth, Act i. Sc. vi.

¹³ This (says Mr. Douce) is a common tradition in Gloucestershire, and is thus related:—'Our Saviour went into a baker's shop where they were baking, and asked for some bread to eat. The mistress of the shop immediately put a piece of dough in the oven to bake for him; but was reprimanded by her daughter, who insisting that the piece of dough was too large, reduced it to a very small size. The dough, however, immediately began to swell, and presently became of a most enormous size. Whereupon the baker's daughter cried out Heugh, heugh, heugh, which owl-like noise probably induced our Saviour to transform her into that bird for her wickedness.' The story is related to deter children from illiberal behaviour to the poor.

¹⁴ The old copies read:—

'To-morrow 'tis Saint Valentine's day.'

The emendation was made by Dr. Farmer. The origin of the choosing of Valentines has not been clearly developed. Mr. Douce traces it to a Pagan custom of the same kind during the Lupercalia feasts in honour of Pan and Juno, celebrated in the month of February by the Romans. The anniversary of the good bishop, or Saint Valentine, happening in this month, the pious early promoters of christianity placed this popular custom under the patronage of the saint, in order to eradicate the notion of its pagan origin. In France the *Valantin* was a moveable feast, celebrated on the first Sunday in Lent, which was called the *jour des brandons*, because the boys carried about lighted torches on that day. It is very probable that the saint has nothing to do with the custom, his legend gives no clue to any such supposition. The popular notion that the birds choose their mates about this period has its rise in the poetical world of fiction.

*Then up he rose, and don'd his clothes,
And dupp'd¹⁵ the chamber door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.*

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, without an oath, I'll make an end on't:

*By Gis, and by Saint Charity¹⁶,
Alack, and fye for shame!
Young men will do't, if they come to't;
By cock, they are to blame.*

*Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promised me to wed:*

[He answers.]

*So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed.*

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope, all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think, they should lay him i'the cold ground: My brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies: good night, good night. [Exit.

¹⁵ To *dup* is to *do up*, as to *don* is to *do on*, to *doff* to *do off*, &c. Thus in *Damon and Pythias*, 1582:—'The porters are drunk, will they not *dup* the gate to day?' The phrase probably had its origin from *doing up* or lifting the latch. In the old cant language to *dup* the *gyger* was to open the door. See Harman's *Caveat for Cursetors*, 1575.

¹⁶ *Saint Charity* is found in the *Martyrology* on the first of August. 'Romæ passio sanctarum virginum Fidei, Spei, et *Charitas*, quæ sub Hadriano principe martyriæ coronam adeptæ sunt.' Spenser mentions her in *Eclog.* v. 225. *By gis* and *by cock* are only corruptions, or rather substitutions, for different forms of imprecation by the sacred name.

King. Follow her close! give her good watch, I
pray you. [*Exit* HORATIO.]

O! this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death: And now behold,
O Gertrude, Gertrude¹⁷,
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions! First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: The people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whis-
pers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but
greenly¹⁸,
In hugger-mugger¹⁹ to inter him: Poor Ophelia
Divided from herself, and her fair judgment;
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts.
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France:
Feeds on his wonder²⁰, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;

¹⁷ In the quarto 1603 the King says:—

‘Ah pretty wretch! this is a change indeed:
O time, how swiftly runs our joys away?
Content on earth was never certain bred,
To-day we laugh and live, to-morrow dead.’

¹⁸ *Greenly* is *unskilfully*, with *inexperience*.

¹⁹ i. e. *secretly*. ‘*Clandestinare*, to *hide* or *conceal by stealth*, or in *hugger mugger*.’—*Florio*. Thus in North's translation of Plutarch:—‘Antonius, thinking that his body should be honourably buried, and not in *hugger mugger*.’ Pope, offended at this strange phrase, changed it to *private*, and was followed by others. Upon which Johnson remarks:—‘If phraseology is to be changed as words grow uncouth by disuse, or gross by vulgarity, the history of every language will be lost: we shall no longer have the words of any author: and, as these alterations will be often unskilfully made, we shall in time have very little of his meaning.’

²⁰ The quarto reads—‘*Keeps* on his wonder.’ The folio—‘*Feeds* on this wonder.’

Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
 Will nothing stick our person to arraign.
 In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
 Like to a murdering piece²¹, in many places
 Gives me superfluous death! [A noise within.
Queen. Alack! what noise is this²²?

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Attend.

Where are my Switzers²³? Let them guard the door:
 What is the matter?

Gent. Save yourself, my lord;
 The ocean, overpeering of his list,
 Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
 Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
 O'erbears your officers! The rabble call him lord;
 And, as the world were now but to begin,
 Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
 The ratifiers and props of every word,
 They cry, *Choose we; Laertes shall be king*²⁴!

²¹ A murdering-piece, or *murderer*, was a small piece of artillery; in French *meurtrière*. It took its name from the loopholes and embrasures in towers and fortifications, which were so called. The portholes in the forecastle of a ship were also thus denominated. '*Meurtriére, c'est un petit canonniere, comme celles des tours et murailles, ainsi appelé, parceque tirant par icelle a desceu, ceux ausquels on tire sont facilement meurtri.*'—*Nicot.* '*Visiere meurtriére, a port-hole for a murdering-piece in the forecastle of a ship.*'—*Cotgrave.* Case shot, filled with small bullets, nails, old iron, &c. was often used in these *murderers*. This accounts for the raking fire attributed to them in the text, and in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Double Marriage*:—

' — like a *murdering-piece*, aims not at me,
 But all that stand within the dangerous level.'

²² The speech of the queen is omitted in the quartos.

²³ *Switzers*, for royal guards. The Swiss were then, as since, mercenary soldiers of any nation that could afford to pay them.

²⁴ The meaning of this contested passage appears to me this: The rabble call him lord; and (*as if* the world were now but to

Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
 O, this is counter²⁵, you false Danish dogs.

King. The doors are broke. [Noise within.

Enter LAERTES, armed; Danes following.

Laer. Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all without.

Dan. No, let's come in.

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

Dan. We will, we will.

[*They retire without the door.*

Laer. I thank you:—keep the door.—O thou vile king,

Give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laer. That drop of blood, that's calm, proclaims me bastard;

Cries, cuckold, to my father; brands the harlot
 Even here, between the chaste unsmirch'd²⁶ brow
 Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
 That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?—
 Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person;
 There's such divinity doth hedge²⁷ a king,

begin, *as if antiquity were forgot; and custom were unknown*)
this rabble, the ratifiers and props of every idle word, cry *Choose we,* &c.

²⁵ Hounds are said to run *counter* when they are upon a false scent, or hunt it by the heel, running backward and mistaking the course of the game. See Comedy of Errors, Act iv. Sc. 2.

²⁶ *Unsmirched* is unsullied, spotless. See Act i. Sc. 3, p. 180, note 4.

²⁷ Quarto 1603—*wall*. Mr. Boswell has adduced the following anecdote of Queen Elizabeth as an apposite illustration of this passage:—'While her majesty was on the Thames, near Greenwich, a shot was fired by accident, which struck the royal barge, and hurt a waterman near her. The French ambassador being amazed, and all crying Treason, Treason! yet she, with

That treason can but peep to what it would,
 Acts little of his will.—Tell me, Laertes,
 Why thou art thus incens'd;—Let him go, Ger-
 trude;—

Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:
 To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
 Conscience, and grace, to the profoundest pit!
 I dare damnation: To this point I stand,—
 That both the worlds I give to negligence²⁸,
 Let come what comes; only I'll be reveng'd
 Most thoroughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world's:
 And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,
 They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,
 If you desire to know the certainty
 Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge,
 That, sweepstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
 Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my
 arms;

an undaunted spirit, came to the open place of the barge, and bade them never fear, for if the shot were made at her, they durst not shoot again: such majesty had her presence, and such boldness her heart, that she despised fear, and was, as all princes are, or should be, so full of *divine fullness*, that guiltie mortality durst not behold her but with dazzled eyes.'—*Henry Chettle's England's Mourning Garment.*

²⁸ ' But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer?
 Macbeth.

And like the kind life-rendering pelican,
 Repast them with my blood ²⁹.

King. Why, now you speak
 Like a good child, and a true gentleman.
 That I am guiltless of your father's death,
 And am most sensibly ³⁰ in grief for it,
 It shall as level to your judgment pierce ³¹
 As day does to your eye.

Danes. [*Within.*] Let her come in.

Laer. How now! what noise is that?

*Enter OPHELIA, fantastically dressed with Straws
 and Flowers.*

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
 Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—
 By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight,
 Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
 Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
 O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits
 Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
 Nature is fine ³² in love; and, where 'tis fine,

²⁹ The folio reads *politician* instead of *pelican*. This fabulous bird is not unfrequently made use of for purposes of poetical illustration by our elder poets: Shakspeare has again referred to it in *King Richard II.* and in *King Lear*:—

'Twas this flesh begot these *pelican* daughters.'

In the old play of *King Leir*, 1605, it is also used, but in a different sense:—

'I am as kind as is the *pelican*,

That kills itself to save her young ones' lives.'

³⁰ Folio—sensible.

³¹ *Peirce* is the reading of the folio. The quarto has '*pear*, an awkward contraction of *appear*. I do not see why *appear* is more intelligible. Indeed as *level* is here used for *direct*, Shakspeare's usual meaning of the word, the reading of the quarto, preferred by Johnson and Steevens, is less proper.

³² 'Nature is *fine* in love.' The three concluding lines of this speech are not in the quarto. The meaning appears to be, Nature is refined or subtilised by love, the senses are rendered more ethereal, and being thus refined, some precious portions of the

It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. *They bore him barefac'd on the bier ;
Hey no nonny, nonny hey nonny :
And in his grave rain'd many a tear ;—*

Fare you well, my dove !

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade
revenge,

It could not move thus.

Oph. You must sing, *Down-a-down, an you call
him a-down-a.* O, how the wheel³³ becomes it ! it
is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

mental energies fly off, or are sent after the beloved object ; when
bereft of that object they are lost to us, and we are left in a state
of mental privation:—

‘ ——— Even so by love the young and tender wit
Is turned to folly.’

‘ Love is a smoke, rais'd with the fume of sighs ;
Being urg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes ;
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears :
What is it else?—a madness,’ &c.

³³ The *wheel* is the *burthen* of a ballad, from the Latin *rota*, a
round, which is usually accompanied with a burthen frequently
repeated. Thus also in old French, *roterie* signified such a *round*
or *catch*, and *rotuenge*, or *rotruhenge*, the *burthen* or *refrain* as it
is now called. Our old English term *refrette*, ‘ the foote of the
dittie, a verse often interlaced, or the burden of a song,’ was pro-
bably from *refrain* ; or from *refresteler*, to pipe over again. It
is used by Chaucer in The Testament of Love. This term was
not obsolete in Cotgrave's time, though it would now be as difficult
to adduce an instance of its use as of the *wheel*, at the same time
the quotation will show that the *down* of a ballad was another
term for the *burthen*. ‘ Refrain, the *refret*, burthen, or *downe* of
a ballad.’ All this discussion is rendered necessary, because
Steevens unfortunately forgot to note from whence he made the
following extract, though he knew it was from the preface to
some black letter collection of songs or sonnets:—‘ The song
was accounted a good one, though it was not moche graced with
the *wheele*, which in no wise accorded with the subject matter
thereof.’ Thus also Nicholas Breton, in his *Toyes for Idle*
Head, 1577 :—

‘ That I may sing full merrily
Not heigh ho wele, but care away.’

It should be remembered that the old musical instrument called

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;
'pray you, love, remember; and there is pansies,
that's for thoughts³⁴.

a *rote*, from its *wheel*, was also termed *vielle*, quasi *wheel*. It must surely have been out of a mere spirit of controversy that Malone affected to think that the spinning-wheel was alluded to by Ophelia.

³⁴ Our ancestors gave to almost every flower and plant its emblematic meaning, and like the ladies of the east, made them almost as expressive as written language, in their hieroglyphical sense. Perdita, in *The Winter's Tale*, distributes her flowers in the same manner as Ophelia, and some of them with the same meaning. In *The Handfall of Pleasant Delites*, 1584, recently reprinted in Mr. Park's *Heliconia*, we have a ballad called 'A Nosegaie alwaies sweet for Lovers to send for Tokens,' where we find:—

' *Rosemarie* is for remembrance
Betweene us day and night;
Wishing that I might alwaies have
You present in my sight.'

Rosemarie had this attribute because it was said to strengthen the memory, and was therefore used as a token of remembrance and affection between lovers, and was distributed as an emblem both at weddings and funerals. Why *pansies* (*pensées*) are emblems of thoughts is obvious. *Fennel* was emblematic of *flattery*, and 'Dare finocchio, to give fennel,' was in other words 'to flatter, to dissemble,' according to Florio. Thus in the ballad above cited:—

' *Fennel* is for flatterers,
An evil thing 'tis sure.'

Browne, in his *Britannia's Pastorals*, says:—

' The *columbine*, in tawny often taken,
Is then ascribed to such as are forsaken.'

Rue was for *ruth* or *repentance*. It was also commonly called *herbgrace*, probably from being accounted 'a present remedy against all poison, and a potent auxiliary in exorcisms, all evil things fleeing from it.' By wearing it with a difference (an heraldic term for a mark of distinction) Ophelia may mean that the queen should wear it as a *mark of repentance*; herself as a *token of grief*. The *daisy* was emblematic of a *dissembler*:—
'Next them grew the *dissembling daisy*, to warne such light of love wenches not to trust every fair promise that such amorous batchelors make.'—*Green's Quip for an Upstart Courtier*. The *violet* is for *faithfulness*, and is thus characterised in *The Lover's*

Laer. A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines:—there's rue for you; and here's some for me:—we may call it, herb of grace o'Sundays:—you may wear your rue with a difference.—There's a daisy:—I would give you some violets; but they withered all, when my father died:—They say, he made a good end,——

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,——

[Sings.

Laer. Thought³⁵ and affliction, passion, hell itself,

She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

Oph. And will he not come again?

[Sings.

And will he not come again?

No, no, he is dead,

Go to thy death-bed,

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,

All flaxen was his poll:

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan;

God 'a mercy on his soul³⁶!

Nosegaie. In Bion's beautiful elegy on the death of Adonis, Mr. Todd has pointed out:—

‘ ——— πάντα σὺν αὐτῷ

Ὡς τήνος τέθνακε, καὶ ἄνθρα πάντ' ἐμαράνθη.’

³⁵ *Thought*, among our ancestors, was used for *grief, care, pensiveness*. ‘Curarum volvere in pectore. He will die for sorrow and thought.’—*Baret*. Thus in Antony and Cleopatra:—

‘*Cleo.* What shall we do, Enobarbus?

‘*Eno.*

Think and die.’

See note on that passage, vol. vii. p. 468, note 1.

³⁶ Poor Ophelia in her madness remembers the ends of many old popular ballads. ‘Bonny Robin’ appears to have been a favourite, for there were many others written to that tune. The editors have *not* traced the present one. It is introduced in

And of all christian souls ! I pray God. God be wi' you !
[*Exit OPHELIA.*

Laer. Do you see this, O God ?

King. Laertes, I must commune³⁷ with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction ; but, if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content³⁸.

Laer. Let this be so ;
His means of death, his obscure funeral³⁹,—
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,

Eastward Hoe, written by Jonson, Chapman, and Marston, where some parts of this play are apparently burlesqued. Hamlet is the name given to a foolish footman in the same scene. I know not why it should be considered an attack on Shakspeare ; it was the usual licence of comedy to sport with every thing serious and even sacred. Hamlet Travestie may as well be called an invidious attack on Shakspeare.

³⁷ The folio reads *common*, which is only a varied orthography of the same word. ' We will devise and *common* of these matters.'—*Baret.*

³⁸ Thus in the quarto 1603 :—

' *King.* Content you, good Leartes, for a time,
Although I know your grief is as a flood,
Brim full of sorrow, but forbear a while,
And think already the revenge is done
On him that makes you such a hapless son.

' *Lear.* You have prevail'd, my lord, a while I'll strive,
To bury grief within a tomb of wrath,
Which once unheard, then the world shall hear
Leartes had a father he held dear.

' *King.* No more of that, ere many days be done
You shall hear that you do not dream upon.'

³⁹ Folio—*burial.*

No noble rite, nor formal ostentation⁴⁰,—
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
That I must call't in question.

King. So you shall;
And where the offence is, let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Another Room in the same.*

Enter HORATIO and a Servant.

Hor. What are they that would speak with me?

Serv. Sailors¹, sir;
They say, they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in.—
[*Exit Servant.*]

I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

1 *Sail.* God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

1 *Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir: it comes² from the ambassador that was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. [*Reads.*] Horatio, *when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king; they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase: Finding ourselves too slow of sail,*

⁴⁰ The funerals of knights and persons of rank were made with great ceremony and ostentation formerly. Sir John Hawkins (himself of the order) observes that 'the sword, the helmet, the gauntlet, spurs, and tabard are still hung over the grave of every knight.'

¹ Quarto—*sea-faring men.*

² Folio—it came.

we put on a compelled valour ; and in the grapple I boarded them : on the instant, they got clear of our ship ; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy ; but they knew what they did ; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent ; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou would'st fly death. I have words to speak in thine³ ear, will make thee dumb ; yet are they much too light for the bore⁴ of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England : of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

He that thou knowest thine, Hamlet.

Come, I will give you way for these your letters ; And do't the speedier, that you may direct me To him from whom you brought them. [Exeunt.

SCENE VII. *Another Room in the same.*

Enter King and LAERTES.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,

And you must put me in your heart for friend ; Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear, That he, which hath your noble father slain, Pursu'd my life.

Laer. It well appears :—But tell me, Why you proceeded not against these feats, So crimeful¹ and so capital in nature, As by your safety, greatness, wisdom, all things else, You mainly were stirr'd up.

³ Folio—*your*.

⁴ The *bore* is the caliber of a gun. The *matter* (says Hamlet) would carry heavier words.

¹ Quarto—*Criminal*. Greatness is omitted in the folio.

King.

O, for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The queen, his
mother,

Lives almost by his looks; and for myself,
(My virtue, or my plague, be it either which),
She is so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a publick count I might not go,
Is, the great love the general gender² bear him:
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces³; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind⁴,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms;
Whose worth, if praises may go back again⁵,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections:—But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must
not think,
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger⁶,

² i. e. the 'common race of the people.' We have the *general* and the *million* in other places in the same sense.

³ 'Would, like the spring which turneth wood to stone, convert his *fetters* into graces:' punishment would only give him more grace in their opinion. The quarto reads *work* for *would*.

⁴ '——— my arrows

Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind.'

'*Lighte shaftes* cannot stand in a *rough wind*.'—*Ascham's Toxophilus*, 1589, p. 57.

⁵ 'If praises may go back again.' 'If I may praise what has been, but is now to be found no more.'

⁶ 'Idcirco stolidam præbet tibi vellere barbam

Jupiter?

Persius, Sat. ii.

And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more:
 I loved your father, and we love ourself;
 And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,—
 How now⁷? what news?

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
 This to your majesty; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say: I saw them not;
 They were given me by Claudio, he received them
 Of him that brought them⁸.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them:—
 Leave us. *[Exit Messenger.]*

[Reads.] *High and mighty, you shall know, I am
 set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg
 leave to see your kingly eyes: when I shall, first ask-
 ing your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of
 my sudden and more strange return.* Hamlet.

What should this mean! Are all the rest come back?
 Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. *Naked,*—
 And, in a postscript here, he says, *alone*:
 Can you advise me?

Laer. I am lost in it, my lord. But let him come;
 It warms the very sickness in my heart,
 That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
Thus diddest thou.

King. If it be so, Laertes,
 As how should it be so? how otherwise?—
 Will you be rul'd by me?

⁷ *How now* is omitted in the quarto: as is *letters* in the next speech.

⁸ This hemistich is not in the folio.

Laer. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'errule me to a peace⁹.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,—

As checking¹⁰ at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it,—I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe;
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it, accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be rul'd;
The rather, if you could devise it so,
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him,
As did that one; and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege¹¹.

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears,
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,

⁹ First folio omitting *Ay, my lord*, reads *If so you'll not o'errule me to a peace*.

¹⁰ To *check*, to hold off, or fly from, as in fear. It is a phrase taken from falconry:—'For who knows not, quoth she, that this hawk, which comes now so fair to the fist, may to-morrow *check* at the lure.'—*Hinde's Eliosto Libidinoso*, 1606.

¹¹ Of the unworthiest *siege*, of the lowest rank: *siege* for *seat* or *place*:—

' ——— I fetch my birth
From men of royal *seige*.'

Othello.

Importing health and graveness¹².—Two months since,

Here was a gentleman of Normandy,—
I have seen myself, and serv'd against the French,
And they can well on horseback : but this gallant
Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat;
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorps'd and demi-natur'd
With the brave beast : so far he topp'd my thought,
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks¹³,
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman was't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamord.

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well: he is the brooch, indeed,
And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you;
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence¹⁴,
And for your rapier most especial,
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you: the scrimers¹⁵ of their
nation,

He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them : Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
That he could nothing do, but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with you.
Now, out of this,——

¹² i. e. *implying* or *denoting* gravity and attention to health. If we should not rather read *wealth* for *health*.

¹³ 'That I, in *forgery* of shapes and tricks.'
'That I, in *imagining* and *describing* his feats,' &c.

¹⁴ Science of defence, i. e. fencing.

¹⁵ *Scrimers*, fencers, from *escrimeur*, Fr. This unfavourable description of French swordsmen is not in the folio.

Laer. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think, you did not love your
father;

But that I know, love is begun by time¹⁶;
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it:
And nothing is at a like goodness still;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy¹⁷,
Dies in his own too-much: That we would do,
We should do when we would; for this *would* changes,
And hath abatements and delays as many,
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this *should* is like a spendthrift's sigh¹⁸,

¹⁶ 'But that I know love is begun by time,' &c. 'As love is begun by *time*, and has its gradual increase, so *time* qualifies and abates it.' *Passages of proof* are transactions of daily experience. The next ten lines are not in the folio.

¹⁷ *Plurisy* is *superabundance*; our ancestors used the word in this sense, as if it came from *plus*, *pluris*, and not from *πλευρά*. The disease was formerly thought to proceed from too much blood flowing to the part affected:—

' ——— in a word,

Thy *plurisy* of goodness is thy ill.'

Massinger's Unnatural Combat.

¹⁸ Johnson says it is a prevalent notion 'that *sighs* impair the strength, and wear out the animal powers.' Steevens makes a ludicrous mistake in the quotation from the 'Governal of Helth,' wherein he takes *sythes* (times) to signify *sighs*. Shakspeare in King Henry VI. has '*blood-consuming sighs*.' And in Fenton's Tragical Discourses:—'Your scorching *sighes* that have already drained your body of his wholesome humoures.' The reading of the old copies, which I have restored, had been altered in the modern editions to '*a spendthrift sigh*,' without reason. Mr. Blakeway justly observes, that 'Sorrow for neglected opportu-

That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o'the ulcer:
Hamlet comes back; What would you undertake,
To show yourself in deed your father's son
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i'the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;

Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber:
Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home:
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine, together,

And wager o'er your heads: he, being remiss¹⁹,
Most generous and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that, with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated²⁰, and, in a pass of practice²¹,
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do't:

And, for the purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,

nities and time abused seems most aptly compared to *the sigh of a spendthrift*—good resolutions not carried into effect are deeply injurious to the moral character. Like sighs, *they hurt by easing*, they unburden the mind and satisfy the conscience, without producing any effect upon the conduct.'

¹⁹ 'He being remiss.' He being not vigilant; or incautious.

²⁰ i. e. unblunted, to *bate*, or rather 'to *rebate*, was to make dull. *Aciem ferre hebetare*.' Thus in *Love's Labour's Lost* we have—

'That honour which shall *bate* his scythe's keen edge.'
And in *Measure for Measure* :—

'—— *rebate* and blunt his natural edge.'

²¹ *Pass of practice* is an *insidious thrust*. Shakspeare, in common with many of his cotemporaries, always uses *practice* for art, deceit, treachery.

Here it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
 Collected from all simples that have virtue
 Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
 That is but scratch'd withal : I'll touch my point
 With this contagion ; that, if I gall him slightly,
 May be death²².

King. Let's further think of this ;
 Weigh, what convenience, both of time and means,
 May fit us to our shape : If this should fail,
 And that our drift look through our bad performance,
 Were better not assay'd : therefore this project
 Should have a back, or second, that might hold,
 This should blast in proof²³. Soft ;—let me see :—
 We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings²⁴,
 Ha't :

When in your motion you are hot and dry,
 As make your bouts more violent to that end,)
 And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd²⁵ him
 A chalice for the nonce ; whereon but sipping,
 He by chance escape your venom'd stuck²⁶,
 Our purpose may hold there. But stay, what noise²⁷ ?

²² Ritson has exclaimed with just indignation and abhorrence
 against the villanous assassinlike treachery of Laertes in this
 cruel plot: he observes ' There is more occasion that he should
 be pointed out for an object of abhorrence, as he is a character
 we are led to respect and admire in some preceding scenes.' In
 the old quarto of 1603 this contrivance originates with the
 sig :—

' When you are hot, in midst of all your play,
 Among the foils shall a keen rapier lie,
 Steeped in a mixture of deadly poison,
 That if it draws but the least dram of blood
 In any part of him he cannot live.'

²³ If this should *blast in proof*, as fire arms sometimes burst in
 losing their strength.

²⁴ *Cunning* is skill.

²⁵ The quarto reads *prefar'd*; the folio *prepar'd*. The modern
 editors read *preferr'd*, but I think without good reason.

²⁶ A *stuck* is a *thrust*. *Stoccata*, Ital. Sometimes called a
ccado in English.

²⁷ ' *But stay, what noise?*' these words are not in the folio.

Enter Queen.

How now, sweet queen?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow:—Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows ascaunt²⁸ the brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream:
Therewith fantastick garlands did she make
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples²⁹,
That liberal³⁰ shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up:
Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes³¹;
As one incapable³² of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indu'd³³
Unto that element: but long it could not be,
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,

²⁸ *Ascaunt*, thus the quarto: the folio reads *aslant*. *Ascaunce* is the same as *askew*, sideways, overthwart; *à travers*, Fr.

²⁹ The ancient botanical name of the *long purples* was *testiculis morionis*, or *orchis priapiscus*. The *grosser name* to which the queen alludes is sufficiently known in many parts of England. It had kindred appellations in other languages. In Sussex it is said to be called *dead men's hands*. Its various names may be seen in Lyte's Herbal, 1578, or in Cotgrave's Dictionary.

³⁰ i. e. *licentious*. See *Much Ado about Nothing*, Act iv. Sc. 1, and *Othello*, Act ii. Sc. 1.

³¹ The quarto reads 'snatches of old *lauds*,' i. e. *hymns*. Hymns of praise were so called from the psalm *Laudate Dominum*.

³² i. e. *unsusceptible* of it. See note 21, p. 276.

³³ *Indu'd* was anciently used in the sense of *endowed* with qualities of any kind, as in the phrase 'a child *indued* with the grace and dexteritie that his father had.' Shakspeare may, however, have used it for *habited*, *accustomed*.

Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas then, she is drown'd?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: But yet³⁴
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out³⁵.—Adieu, my lord!
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly drowns³⁶ it. *[Exit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude:
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I, this will give it start again;
Therefore, let's follow. *[Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. A Church Yard.

Enter Two Clowns, with Spades, &c.

1 *Clo.* Is she to be buried in christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 *Clo.* I tell thee, she is; therefore make her grave straight¹: the crowner hath set on her, and finds it christian burial.

³⁴ Thus the quarto 1603:—

‘ Therefore I will not drown thee in my tears,
Revenge it is must yield this heart relief,
For woe begets woe, and grief hangs on grief.’

³⁵ Thus in King Henry V. Act iv. Sc. 6:—

‘ But all my mother came into my eyes,
And gave me up to tears.’

³⁶ The folio reads—*doubts* it.

¹ How Johnson could think that any particular mode of making *Ophelia's* grave was meant I cannot imagine. Nothing

1 *Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2 *Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

1 *Clo.* It must be *se offendendo*; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: If I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act; and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform²; Argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2 *Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

1 *Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; good; here stands the man; good: If the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that; but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself: Argal, he, that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

2 *Clo.* But is this law?

is so common as this mode of expression: *straight* is merely a contraction of *straightway*, immediately. Numerous examples are to be found in Shakspeare, one may suffice from this very play, in Act iii. Sc. 4, Polonius says:—

‘He will come *straight*.’

And Malone cites from G. Herbert's *Jacula Prudentium*, 1651: —‘There is no churchyard so handsome that a man would desire *straight* to be buried there.’

² Warburton says that this is a ridicule on scholastic divisions without distinction; and of distinctions without difference. Shakspeare certainly aims at the legal subtleties used upon occasion of inquests. Sir John Hawkins points out the case of Dame Hales, in Plowden's Commentaries. Her husband Sir James drowned himself in a fit of insanity (produced, it was supposed, by his having been one of the judges who condemned Lady Jane Grey), and the question was about the forfeiture of a lease. There was a great deal of this law logic used on the occasion, as whether he was the *agent* or *patient*; or in other words (as the clown says), whether *he went to the water, or the water came to him*. Malone thinks because Plowden was in law French that Shakspeare could not read him! and yet Malone has shown that Shakspeare is very fond of legal phraseology, and supposes that he must have passed some part of his life in the office of an attorney.

1 *Clo.* Ay, marry is't; crowner's-quest law.

2 *Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of christian burial.

1 *Clo.* Why, there thou say'st: And the more pity; that great folks shall have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves more than their even-christian³. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers: they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clo.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 *Clo.* Why, he had none⁴.

1 *Clo.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the scripture? The scripture says, Adam digged: Could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself——

2 *Clo.* Go to.

1 *Clo.* What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clo.* The gallows-maker, for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith; the

³ *Even-christian*, for *fellow-christian*, was the old mode of expression; and is to be found in Chaucer and the Chroniclers. Wicliffe has *even-servant* for *fellow-servant*. The fact is, that *even*, *like*, and *equal* were synonymous. I will add one more ancient example of the phrase to those cited by Malone:—

'For when a man wol rigt knowe,
Al maner of dette that he owe,
Bothe to God that is ful of migt
And to his *even cristen* rigt.'

Hampole's Speculum Vitæ.

In Alfred's Saxon version of S. Gregory's *Pastoralis Cura*, we have *eƿon-ðeow*, consocius.

⁴ This speech and the next, as far as *arms*, is not in the quarto.

gallows does well: But how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill, to say, the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again: come.

2 *Clo.* Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke⁵.

2 *Clo.* Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clo.* To't.

2 *Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.

1 *Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it; for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating: and, when you are asked this question next, say, a grave-maker; the houses that he makes, last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Vaughan and fetch me a stoup of liquor. [*Exit* 2 Clown.]

1 Clown digs, and sings.

In youth, when I did love, did love⁶,

Methought, it was very sweet,

To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove

O, methought, there was nothing meet.

⁵ 'Ay, tell me that, and *unyoke*.' This was a common phrase for giving over or ceasing to do a thing, a metaphor derived from the *unyoking* of oxen at the end of their labour. Thus in a ditty of the Workmen of Dover, preserved in the additions to Holinshed:—

'My bow is broke, I would *unyoke*,

My foot is sore, I can worke no more.'

These pithy questions were doubtless the fireside amusement of our rustic ancestors. Steevens mentions a collection of them in print, preserved in a volume of scarce tracts in the university library at Cambridge, D. 5. 2. 'The innocence of these *demaundes joyous* (he says) may deserve a praise not always due to their delicacy.'

⁶ The original ballad from whence these stanzas are taken is

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business? he sings at grave-making.

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1 Clo. *But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me into the land,
As if I had never been such.*

[Throws up a scull.

Ham. That scull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jawbone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'erreaches⁷; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier; which could say, *Good-morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?* This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord

printed in Tottel's Miscellany, or 'Songes and Sonnettes' by Lord Surrey and others, 1575. The ballad is attributed to Lord Vaux, and is printed by Dr. Percy in the first volume of his Reliques of Antient Poetry. The ohs and the ahs were most probably meant to express the interruption of the song by the forcible emission of the grave digger's breath at each stroke of the mattock. The original runs thus:—

' I lothe that I did love ;
In youth that I thought swete :
As time requires for my behove,
Methinks they are not mete.

' For age with stealing steps
Hath claude me with his crowch ;
And lusty youthe away he leaps,
As there had bene none such.'

⁷ The folio reads—*ore-offices*.

such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not⁸?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so: and now my lady Worm's⁹; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade: Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats¹⁰ with them? mine ache to think on't.

1 Clo. *A pickaxe and a spade, a spade,* [Sings.

For—and a shrouding sheet:

O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.

[Throws up a scull.

Ham. There's another: Why may not that be the scull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits¹¹ now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce¹² with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Humph! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with

⁸ ' ——— My lord, you gave
Good words the other day of a bay courser
I rode on; it is yours, because you liked it.'

Timon of Athens, Act i.

⁹ The skull that was *my lord such-a-one's* is now *my lady worm's*.

¹⁰ *Loggets*, small logs or pieces of wood. Hence *loggets* was the name of an ancient rustic game, in which a stake was fixed in the ground at which *loggats* were thrown; in short, a ruder kind of quoit play.

¹¹ *Quiddits* are quirks, or subtle questions; and *quillets* are nice and frivolous distinctions. The etymology of this last foolish word has plagued many learned heads. I think that Blount, in his *Glossography*, clearly points out *quodlibet* as the origin of it. Bishop Wilkins calls a *quillet* 'a frivolousness'; and Coles in his *Latin Dict. res frivola*. I find the quarto of 1603 has *quirks* instead of *quiddits*.

¹² See *Comedy of Errors, Act i. Sc. 2, p. 139, note 6.*

his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers¹³, his recoveries: Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries¹⁴, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calves-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance¹⁵ in that. I will speak to this fellow:—Whose grave's this, sirrah?

1 *Clo.* Mine, sir.—

O, a pit of clay for to be made [Sings.

For such a guest is meet.

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed, for thou liest in't.

1 *Clo.* You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say it is

¹³ Shakspeare here is profuse of his legal learning. Ritson, a lawyer, shall interpret for him:—'A recovery with *double voucher*, is the one usually suffered, and is so called from *two* persons (the latter of whom is always the common cryer, or some such inferior person) being successively *voucher*, or called upon to warrant the tenant's title. Both *fines* and *recoveries* are fictions of law, used to convert an estate tail into a fee simple. Statutes are (not acts of parliament) but statutes *merchant*, and staple, particular modes of *recognizance* or acknowledgment for securing *debts*, which thereby become a charge upon the party's land. *Statutes* and *recognizances* are constantly mentioned together in the covenants of a purchase deed.

¹⁴ ['Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries,'] omitted in the quarto.

¹⁵ A quibble is intended. *Deeds* (of parchment) are called the common *assurances* of the realm.

thine : 'tis for the dead, not for the quick ; therefore thou liest.

1 *Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir ; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for ?

1 *Clo.* For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman then ?

1 *Clo.* For none neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't ?

1 *Clo.* One, that was a woman, sir ; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is ! we must speak by the card¹⁶, or equivocation will undo us. By the lord, Horatio, these three¹⁷ years I have taken note of it ; the age is grown so picked¹⁸, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker ?

1 *Clo.* Of all the days i'the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras¹⁹.

Ham. How long's that since ?

1 *Clo.* Cannot you tell that ? every fool can tell that : It was that very day that young Hamlet was born²⁰ : he that is mad, and sent into England.

¹⁶ 'To speak by the card,' is to speak precisely, by rule, or according to a prescribed course. It is a metaphor from the seaman's *card* or chart by which he guides his course.

¹⁷ *Seven*, quarto 1603.

¹⁸ *Picked* is *curious*, over nice. Thus in the Cambridge Dict. 1594 :—' Conquisitus, exquisite, and *picked*, perfite, fine, dainty, *curious*.' See King John, Act i. Sc. 1, p. 339.

¹⁹ 'Look you, here's a skull hath been here this *dozen* year, let me see, ay, ever since our last King Hamlet slew Fortenbrasse in combat : young Hamlet's father, he that's mad.' Quarto of 1603. It will be seen that the poet places this event *thirty* years ago in the present copy. See the next note by Sir William Blackstone.

²⁰ 'By this scene it appears that Hamlet was then thirty years

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

1 *Clo.* Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

1 *Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he²¹.

Ham. How came he mad?

1 *Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

1 *Clo.* Why, here in Denmark; I have been sexton here, man, and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i'the earth ere he rot?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die (as we have many pocky corpses now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in), he will last you some eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another?

1 *Clo.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a scull now hath lain you i'the earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

1 *Clo.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was; Whose do you think it was?

old, and knew Yorick well, who had been dead twenty three years. And yet in the beginning of the play he is spoken of as a *very young* man, one that designed to go back to school, i. e. to the university of Wittenburgh. The poet in the fifth act had forgot what he wrote in the first.—*Blackstone*.

²¹ 'Nimirum insanus paucis videatur; eo quod
Maxima pars hominum morbo jactatur eodem.'

Horat. Sat. 3, Lib. ii.

Ham. Nay, I know not.

1 *Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue, he poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same scull, sir, was Yorick's scull, the king's jester.

Ham. This?

[*Takes the Scull.*]

1 *Clo.* E'en that.

Ham. Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning²²? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber²³, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour²⁴ she must come; make her laugh at that.—'Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think, Alexander look'd o'this fashion i'the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah!

[*Throws down the Scull.*]

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, 'faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead

²² Folio—jeering.

²³ Quarto—table.

²⁴ Favour is countenance, complexion.

it: As thus; Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam: And why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer barrel?

Imperious²⁵ Cæsar, dead, and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O, that the earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw²⁶!
But soft! bût soft! aside:—Here comes the king,

*Enter Priests, &c. in Procession; the Corpse of
OPHELIA, LAERTES, and Mourners, following;
King, Queen, their Trains, &c.*

The queen, the courtiers: Who is this they follow?
And with such maimed rites! This doth betoken,
The corse, they follow, did with desperate hand
Fordo²⁷ its own life. 'Twas of some estate²⁸.
Couch we awhile, and mark.

[Retiring with HORATIO.]

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes,

A very noble youth: Mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

1 *Priest*²⁹. Her obsequies have been as far enlarged

²⁵ *Imperial* is substituted in the folio. Vide *Troilus and Cressida*, Act iv. Sc. 5, p. 425, note 27.

²⁶ A *flaw* is a violent gust of wind. See *Coriolanus*, Act v. Sc. 3, p. 254, note 8.

²⁷ To *fordo* is to undo, to destroy. Thus in *Othello*:—

‘—— This is the night

That either makes me or *fordo*es me quite.’

‘Would to God it might be leful for me to *fordo*o myself, or to make an end of me.’—*Acolastus*, 1529.

²⁸ *Estate* for rank. *Estates* was a common term for persons of rank.

²⁹ Quarto—*Doctor*.

As we have warranty: Her death was doubtful;
 And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
 She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
 Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
 Shards³⁰, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her,
 Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants³¹,
 Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
 Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done?

1 *Priest.*

No more be done!

We should profane the service of the dead,
 To sing a *requiem*³², and such rest to her
 As to peace-parted souls.

Laer.

Lay her i'the earth;—

And from her fair and unpolluted flesh,
 May violets spring³³!—I tell thee, churlish priest,
 A minist'ring angel shall my sister be,
 When thou liest howling.

³⁰ *Shards*, quasi *shreds* (as Tooke says), the past participle of the verb *rycjan*, to sheer, cut off, or divide. It does not only mean fragments of pots and tiles, but rubbish of any kind. Baret has '*shardcs of stones, fragmentum lapidis*;' and '*shardcs, or pieces of stones broken and shattred, rubbel or rubbish of old houses*.' Our version of the Bible has preserved to us *pot-sherds*; and I have heard bricklayers, in Surrey and Sussex, use the compounds *tile-sherds*, *slate-sherds*, &c.

³¹ i. e. garlands. Still used in most northern languages, but no other example of its use among us has yet offered itself. It is thought that Shakspeare may have met with the word in some old history of Hamlet, which furnished him with his fable. The editor of the first folio changed this unusual word for *rites*, a less appropriate word. Warburton boldly substituted *chants*, and Mr. Alexander Chalmers affirms that this is the true word.'

³² A *requiem* is a mass sung for the rest of the soul of the dead. So called from the words—

'*Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine,*' &c.

part of the service.

³³

' — e tumulo fortunataque favilla
 Nascentur violæ?'

Persius, Sat. i.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: Farewell!

[Scattering Flowers.]

I hop'd, thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought, thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.

Laer.

O, treble woe

Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee off!—Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:

[Leaps into the Grave.]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead;
Till of this flat a mountain you have made
To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [Advancing.] What is he, whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,
Hamlet the Dane.

[Leaps into the Grave.]

Laer. The devil take thy soul!

[Grappling with him.]

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.

I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenetic and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear: Hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen.

Hamlet, Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen,——

Hor.

Good my lord, be quiet.

[The Attendants part them, and they come out of the Grave.]

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son! what theme?

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love
Make up my sum. — What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. Zounds, show me what thou'lt do:
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear
thyself?

Woo't drink up Esile³⁴, eat a crocodile?
I'll do't.—Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us; till our ground,

³⁴ The quarto of 1603 reads:—'*Wilt drink up vessels:*' and instead of *Ossa*, *Oosell*. Some of the commentators have supposed that by *esill* Hamlet means *vinegar*. But surely the strain of exaggeration and rant of the rest of the speech requires some more impossible feat than that of drinking up vinegar. What river, lake, or firth Shakspeare meant to designate is uncertain, perhaps the Issel, but the firth of *Iyse* is nearest to his scene of action, and near enough in name. What the late editors meant by their strange contraction *woul't* I know not. Mr. Gifford observes that they appear none of them to have understood the grammatical construction of the passage. *Woo't* or *woot'o*, in the northern counties, is the common contraction of *wouldst thou*, and this is the reading of the old copies. This sort of hyperbole Malone has shown was common with our ancient poets:—

'Come drink up Rhine, Thames, and Meander dry.'

Eastward Hoe, 1609.

'Else would I set my mouth to Tygris streams,
And drink up overflowing Euphrates.'

Greene's Orlando Furioso, 1599.

'Sooner shall thou drink the ocean dry
Than conquer Malta.'

Marlowe's Jew of Malta.

Shakspeare also in *King Richard II.*:—

'—— The task he undertakes

Is numbering sands and drinking oceans dry.'

And in *Troilus and Cressida*:—'When we vow to weep seas,
live in fire, eat rocks, tame tigers, &c.

Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
 Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
 I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness:
 And thus a while the fit will work on him;
 Anon, as patient as the female dove,
 When that her golden couplets are disclosed³⁵,
 His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir;
 What is the reason that you use me thus?
 I lov'd you ever: But it is no matter;
 Let Hercules himself do what he may,
 The cat will mew, the dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

King. I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon
 him.— [*Exit* HORATIO.
 Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
 [*To* LAERTES.

We'll put the matter to the present push.—
 Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.—
 This grave shall have a living monument:
 An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
 Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Hall in the Castle.*

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO.

Ham. So much for this, sir: now shall you see
 the other;—

You do remember all the circumstance?

Hor. Remember it, my lord!

Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,

³⁵ See note 30 on Act iii. Sc. 1, p. 244. The *golden couplets* alludes to the dove only laying two eggs. The young nestlings when first disclosed are only covered with a yellow down, and the mother rarely leaves the nest, in consequence of the tenderness of her young.

That would not let me sleep : methought, I lay
 Worse than the mutines ¹ in the bilboes ². Rashly,
 And prais'd be rashness for it,—Let us know,
 Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
 When our deep plots do pall ³: and that should
 teach us,
 There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
 Rough-hew them how we will.

Hor.

That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin,
 My sea-gown ⁴ scarf'd about me, in the dark
 Grop'd I to find out them: had my desire;
 Finger'd their packet: and, in fine, withdrew
 To mine own room again: making so bold,
 My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
 Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,
 A royal knavery; an exact command,—
 Larded with many several sorts of reasons,—
 Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,

¹ i. e. mutineers. See King John, Act ii. Sc. 2.

² The *bilboes* were bars of iron with fetters annexed to them, by which mutinous or disorderly sailors were anciently linked together. The word is derived from *Bilboa*, in Spain, where implements of iron and steel were fabricated. To understand Shakspeare's allusion, it should be known that as these fetters connected the legs of the offenders very closely together, their attempts to rest must be as fruitless as those of Hamlet, in whose mind *there was a kind of fighting that would not let him sleep*. Every motion of one must disturb his partner in confinement. The *bilboes* are still shown in the Tower, among the other spoils of the Spanish Armada.

³ To *pall* was to fade or fall away; to become, as it were, dead, or without spirit: from the old French *pasler*. Thus in Antony and Cleopatra:—

‘I'll never follow thy *pall'd* fortunes more.’

See vol. viii. p. 437, note 12.

⁴ Malone has told us that the *sea-gown* appears to have been the usual dress of seamen in Shakspeare's time; but not a word of what it was like. ‘Esclavine (says Cotgrave), a sea-gowne, a coarse high collar'd and shortsleeved gowne, reaching to the mid-leg, and used mostly by seamen and sailors.’

With, ho! such bugs⁵ and goblins in my life,—
 That, on the supervise⁶, no leisure bated,
 No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
 My head should be struck off.

Hor. Is't possible?

Ham. Here's the commission; read it at more leisure.

But wilt thou hear now how I did proceed?

Hor. Ay, 'beseech you.

Ham. Being thus benetted round with villanies,
 Or⁷ I could make a prologue to my brains,
 They had begun the play;—I sat me down;
 Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair:
 I once did hold it, as our statist⁸ do,
 A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
 How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
 It did me yeoman's service⁹: Wilt thou know
 The effect of what I wrote?

⁵ 'With, ho! such *bugs and goblins* in my life.' 'With such *causes of terror* arising from my character and designs.' *Bugs* were no less terrific than goblins. We now call them *bugbears*.

⁶ '—on the supervise, no leisure bated.' *The supervise* is the looking over; *no leisure bated* means without any abatement or intermission of time.

⁷ *Or* for *ere*, before. See *Tempest*, Act i. Sc. 2, p. 12.

⁸ *Statists* are statesmen. Blackstone says, that 'most of our great men of Shakspeare's time wrote very bad hands; their secretaries very neat ones.' This must be taken with some qualification; for Elizabeth's two most powerful ministers, Leicester and Burleigh, both wrote good hands. It is certain that there were some who did write most wretched scrawls, but probably not from affectation; though it was accounted a mechanical and vulgar accomplishment to write a fair hand. The worst and most unintelligible scrawls I have met with, are Sir Richard Sackville's, in Elizabeth's time; and the miserable scribbling of Secretary Conway, of whom James said they had given him a secretary that could neither write nor read.

⁹ *Yeoman's service* I take to be *good substantial service*. The ancient yeomen were famous for their staunch valour in the field; and Sir Thomas Smyth says, they were 'the stable troop of footmen that affraide all France.'

Hor. Ay, good my lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,—
As England was his faithful tributary;
As love between them like the palm might flourish;
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a comma¹⁰ 'tween their amities;
And many such like ases of great charge,—
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more, or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd¹¹.

Hor. How was this seal'd?

Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant;
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal:
Folded the writ up in form of the other;
Subscrib'd it; gave 't the impression; plac'd it safely,
The changeling never known: Now, the next day
Was our seafight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow:
'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, think thee, stand me now upon¹²?

¹⁰ [— stand a *comma* 'tween their amities.] This is oddly expressed, as Johnson observes: but the meaning appears to be, 'Stand as a *comma*, i. e. as a note of connexion between their amities, to prevent them from being brought to a *period*.'

¹¹ [Not shriving-time allow'd.] That is, without allowing time for the *confession* of their sins.

¹² [*Bethink* thee, does it not become incumbent upon me to re-

He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother;
 Popp'd in between the election and my hopes;
 Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
 And with such cozenage; is't not perfect conscience,
 To quit him with this arm; and is't not to be damn'd,
 To let this canker of our nature come
 In further evil?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England,

What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
 And a man's life no more than to say, one.
 But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
 That to Laertes I forgot myself;
 For by the image of my cause, I see
 The portraiture of his: I'll count¹³ his favours:
 But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
 Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace: who comes here?

*Enter OSRIC*¹⁴.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly¹⁵?

Hor. No, my good lord.

quite him, &c.] Vide note upon King Richard II. Act ii. Sc. 3, vol. v. p. 55. This passage and the three following speeches are not in the quartos.

¹³ [—— I'll *count* his favours.] Rowe changed this to 'I'll *court* his favour;' but there is no necessity for change. Hamlet means, 'I'll make account of his favours,' i. e. of his *good will*; for this was the general meaning of *favours* in the poet's time.

¹⁴ The quarto of 1603—'Enter a braggart Gentleman.'

¹⁵ In Troilus and Cressida, Thersites says, 'How the poor world is pestered with such *water-flies*; diminutives of nature.' The gnats and such like ephemeral insects are not inapt emblems of such *busy triflers* as Osrick.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him: He hath much land, and fertile; let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'Tis a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit: Your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, sir, 'tis very cold: the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry and hot; or my complexion——

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry¹⁶,—as 'twere,—I cannot tell how—My lord, his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head: Sir, this is the matter,—

Ham. I beseech you, remember——

[HAMLET moves him to put on his Hat.

Osr. Nay, good my lord; for my ease, in good faith¹⁷. Sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes: believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences¹⁸, of very soft society, and great showing: Indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card¹⁹ or calendar of gentry, for you shall find

¹⁶ [Exceedingly, my lord; 'tis very sultry.]

'—— igniculum brumæ si tempore poscas
Accipit endromidem; si dexteris æstuo, sudat.'

Juvenal.

¹⁷ The folio omits this and the following fourteen speeches; and in their place substitutes, 'Sir, you are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is at his weapon.'

¹⁸ i. e. *distinguishing* excellencies.

¹⁹ 'The card or calendar of gentry.' The general preceptor of elegance; the card (chart) by which a gentleman is to direct his course; the calendar by which he is to order his time.

in him the continent²⁰ of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you;—though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetick of memory; and yet but raw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth²¹ and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirrour; and, who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more²².

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue! You will do't, sir, really²³.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

²⁰ 'You shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.' *You shall find him containing* and comprising every quality which a gentleman would desire to *contemplate* for imitation. Perhaps we should read, 'You shall find him the continent.'

²¹ *Dearth*, according to Tooke, is 'the third person singular of the verb *to dere*; it means some cause which *dereth*, i. e. maketh dear; or hurteth, or doth mischief.' That *dearth* was, therefore, used for *scarcity*, as well as *dearness*, appears from the following passage in a MS. petition to the council, by the merchants of London, 6 Edw. VI.: speaking of the causes of the *dearness* of cloth they say, 'This detriment cometh through the *dearth* of wool, the procurers whereof being a few in number for the augmentation of the same.'—*Conway Papers*. See vol. i. p. 382, note 5.

²² This speech is a ridicule of the Euphuism, or court jargon of that time.

²³ [Is it not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.] This interrogatory remark is very obscure. The sense may be, 'Is it not possible for this fantastic fellow to understand in plainer language? You will, however, imitate his jargon admirably, really, sir.' It seems very probable that 'another tongue' is an error of the press for 'mother tongue.'

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know, you are not ignorant——

Ham. I would, you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me²⁴.—Well, sir.

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is——

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself²⁵.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed²⁶ he's unfellowed.

Ham. What's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has impawned²⁷, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers²⁸, and so:

²⁴ [If you did, it would not *tend* much toward proving me or confirming me.]—What Hamlet would have added we know not; but surely Shakspeare's use of the word *approve*, upon all occasions, is against Johnson's explanation of it—'to recommend to approbation.' There is no consistency in the commentators; they rarely look at the prevalent sense of a word in the poet, but explain it many ways, to suit their own views of the meaning of a passage.

²⁵ [I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him, &c.] I dare not pretend to know him, lest I should pretend to an equality: no man can completely know another, but by knowing himself, which is the utmost extent of human wisdom.

²⁶ *Meed* is *merit*. Vide King Henry VI. Part III. Act ii. Sc. 1.

²⁷ '*Impawned*.' The folio reads *imponed*. *Pignare*, in Italian, signifies both to *impawn* and to *lay a wager*. The *stakes* are, indeed, a *gage* or *pledge*.

²⁸ *Hangers*, that part of the belt by which the sword was suspended.

Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. I knew, you must be edified by the *margent*²⁹ ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more *german*³⁰ to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides; I would, it might be hangers till then. But, on: Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish: Why is this *impawned*, as you call it?

Osr. The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits³¹; he hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How, if I answer, no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: If it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me: let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

²⁹ 'The *margent*.' The gloss or commentary in old books was usually on the *margin* of the leaf.

³⁰ i.e. more *a kin*. 'Those that are *german* to him, though fifty times removed, shall come under the hangman.'—*Winter's Tale*.

³¹ The conditions of the wager are thus given in the quarto of 1603:—

'Marry, sir, that young Leartes in twelve venies
At rapier and dagger, do not get three odds of you.'

Osr. Shall I deliver you so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

[*Exit.*

Ham. Yours, yours.—He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Hor. This lapwing³² runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham. He did comply³³ with his dug, before he sucked it. Thus has he (and many more of the same bevy³⁴, that, I know, the drossy age dotes on), only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter³⁵; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fanned and winnowed opinions³⁶; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

³² [This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.] Horatio means to call Osrick a raw, unfledged, foolish fellow. It was a common comparison for a forward fool. Thus in Meres's *Wits Treasury*, 1598:—'As the lapwing runneth away with the shell on her head, as soon as she is hatched,' &c.

'Forward lapwing,

He flies with the shell an his head.'

Vittoria Corombona.

³³ 'He did *comply* with his dug, before he sucked it.' See note 47, on Act ii. Sc. 2, p. 224.

³⁴ The folio reads, '*mine* more of the same bevy.' *Mine* is evidently a misprint, and more likely for *manie* (i. e. many) than *mine*. The quarto of 1604 reads, '*many* more of the same *breed*.'

³⁵ 'Outward habit of encounter' is exterior politeness of address.

³⁶ [A kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most *fanned* and *winnowed* opinions, &c.] The folio reads, *fond* and winnowed. The corruption of the quarto, '*prophane* and *trennowed*,' is not worth attention; and I have no doubt that *fond* in the folio should be *fanned*, formerly spelt *fan'd*, and sometimes even without the apostrophe. Fanned and winnowed are almost always coupled by old writers, for reasons

*Enter a Lord*³⁷.

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: He sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes, they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king, and queen, and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you, to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*]

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou would'st not think, how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord,——

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving³⁸, as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

that may be seen under those words in Baret's Alvearie. So Shakspeare himself in Troilus and Cressida:—

'Distinction with a broad and powerful fan,
Puffing at all, winnows the light away.'

The meaning is, 'These men have got the cant of the day, a superficial readiness of slight and cursory conversation, a kind of frothy collection of fashionable prattle, which yet carries them through with the most light and inconsequential judgments; but if brought to the trial by the slightest breath of rational conversation, the bubbles burst; or, in other words, display their emptiness.'

³⁷ All that passes between Hamlet and this Lord is omitted in the folio.

³⁸ i. e. *misgiving*, a giving against, or an internal feeling and prognostic of evil.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestal their repair hither, and say, you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury; there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all: Since no man, of aught he leaves, —knows;—what is't to leave betimes³⁹. Let be.

Enter King, Queen, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, and Attendants, with Foils, &c.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The King puts the hand of LAERTES into that of HAMLET.*]

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I have done you wrong;

But pardon it, as you are a gentleman.

This presence⁴⁰ knows, and you must needs have heard,

How I am punish'd with a sore distraction.

³⁹ ['Since no man, of aught he leaves,—knows;—What is it to leave betimes?'] This is the reading of the folio; the quarto reads, 'Since no man *has* ought of *what* he leaves. What is't to leave betimes.' *Has* is evidently here a blunder for *knows*. Johnson thus interprets the passage:—'Since *no man knows* ought of the state which *he leaves*, since he cannot judge what other years may produce, why should we be afraid of *leaving* life betimes?' Warburton's explanation is very ingenious, but perhaps strains the poet's meaning farther than he intended. 'It is true that by death we lose all the goods of life; yet seeing this loss is no otherwise an evil than as we are sensible of it; and since death removes all sense of it, what matters it how soon we lose them.' This argument against the fear of death has been dilated and placed in a very striking light by the late Mr. Green.—See *Diary of a Lover of Literature, Ipswich, 1810, 4to.* p. 230.—Shakspeare himself has elsewhere said, 'the sense of death is most in apprehension.'

⁴⁰ i. e. the king and queen.

What I have done,
 That might your nature, honour, and exception,
 Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
 Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never, Hamlet:
 If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
 And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,
 Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
 Who does it then? His madness: If't be so,
 Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
 His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
 Sir, in his audience⁴¹,
 Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
 Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
 That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,
 And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
 Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
 To my revenge: but in my terms of honour,
 I stand aloof; and will no reconciliation,
 Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
 I have a voice and precedent of peace,
 To keep my name ungor'd⁴²: But till that time,
 I do receive your offer'd love like love,
 And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;
 And will this brother's wager frankly play.—
 Give us the foils; come on.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance
 Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
 Stick fiery off indeed.

⁴¹ This line is not in the quarto.

⁴² i. e. unwounded. This is a piece of satire on fantastical honour. Though *nature* is satisfied, yet he will ask advice of older men of the sword, whether *artificial honour* ought to be contented with Hamlet's apology.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric.—Cousin Hamlet,

You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds⁴³ o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it: I have seen you both:—
But since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well: These foils have all
length? [*They prepare to play*

Osric. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoups⁴⁴ of wine upon the
table:—

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire:
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union⁴⁵ shall he throw,

⁴³ The king had wagered *six Barbary horses* to a few *rapier poniards*, &c.; that is, about *twenty* to one. These are the odds here meant. The odds the King means in the next speech were *twelve* to *nine* in favour of Hamlet, by Laertes giving him three.

⁴⁴ *Stoup* is a common word in Scotland at this day, and denotes a pewter vessel resembling our wine measures; but of determinate quantity; for there are *gallon-stoups*, *pint-stoups*, *matchkin-stoups*, &c. The vessel in which water is fetched and kept is also called a *water-stoup*. A *stoup* of wine is therefore equivalent to a *pitcher* of wine.

⁴⁵ An *union* is a precious pearl, remarkable for its size. 'A hereupon it is that our dainties and delicacies here at Rome, call them unions, as a man would say singular, and by themselves alone.' To swallow a pearl in a draught seems to have been common to royal and mercantile prodigality. Thus in the second part of 'If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody:—

'Here sixteen thousand pound at one clap goes
Instead of sugar. Gresham *drinks this pearl*
Unto the queen his mistress.'

According to Rondeletus pearls were supposed to have an exalting quality. 'Uniones quæ a conchis, &c. valde cor-

Richer than that which four successive kings
 In Denmark's crown have worn; Give me the cups;
 And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
 The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
 The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth,
Now the king drinks to Hamlet.—Come, begin;—
 And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*]

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment.

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well,—again.

King. Stay, give me drink: Hamlet, this pearl
 is thine;

Here's to thy health.—Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound; and Cannons shot off within.*]

Ham. I'll play this bout first, set it by awhile.

Come.—Another hit; What say you? [*They play.*]

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.—

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:

The queen carouses⁴⁶ to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham. Good madam,—

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord;—I pray you, pardon me.

King. It is the poison'd cup; it is too late.

[*Aside.*]

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

sunt.' Under pretence of throwing a pearl into the cup, the King may be supposed to drop some poisonous drug into the wine. Hamlet subsequently asks him tauntingly, 'Is the union here?'

⁴⁶ i. e. the queen drinks to thy good success.

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think it.

Laer. And yet it is almost against my conscience.

[*Aside.*

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes: You do but dally;

I pray you, pass with your best violence;

I am afeard, you make a wanton⁴⁷ of me.

Laer. Say you so? come on. [*They play.*

Osr. Nothing neither way.

Laer. Have at you now.

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET; then, in scuffling, they change Rapiers, and HAMLET wounds LAERTES.*

King. Part them, they are incens'd.

Ham. Nay, come again. [*The Queen falls.*

Osr. Look to the queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides;—How is it, my lord?

Osr. How is't, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osrice;

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet!

The drink, the drink;—I am poison'd! [*Dies.*

Ham. O villany!—Ho! let the door be lock'd: Treachery! seek it out. [*LAERTES falls.*

Laer. It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain; No medicine in the world can do thee good, In thee there is not half an hour's life; The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,

⁴⁷ i. e. you trifle or play with me as if I were a child.

Unbated⁴⁸, and envenom'd: the foul practice
 Hath turn'd itself on me: lo, here I lie,
 Never to rise again: Thy mother's poison'd;
 I can no more; the king, the king's to blame.

Ham. The point
 Envenom'd too!—Then, venom, to thy work⁴⁹.
[*Stabs the King.*

Osr. & Lords. Treason! treason!

King. O, yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt.

Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned
 Dane,

Drink off this potion:—Is the union here?
 Follow my mother. [*King dies.*

Laer. He is justly serv'd;
 It is a poison temper'd by himself.—
 Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
 Mine and my father's death come not upon thee;
 Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
 I am dead, Horatio:—Wretched queen, adieu!—
 You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
 That are but mutes or audience to this act,
 Had I but time (as this fell sergeant⁵⁰, death,
 Is strict in his arrest), O, I could tell you,—
 But let it be:—Horatio, I am dead;

⁴⁸ See note on Act iv. Sc. 7.

⁴⁹ In the quarto of 1603:—

‘The poison'd instrument within my hand?
 Then venom to thy venom; die, damn'd villain:
 Come drink, here lies thy union here.’ [*King dies.*

⁵⁰ A *sergeant* was a bailiff or sheriff's officer. Shakspeare, in his 74th Sonnet, has likened death to an arrest:—

‘——— when that fell *arrest*,
 Without all bail shall carry me away.’

And Joshua Silvester, in his *Dubartas*:—

‘And *death*, *sergeant* of the eternal Judge,
 Comes very late,’ &c.

Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it;
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane,
Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou'rt a man,—
Give me the cup; let go; by heaven, I'll have it.—
O God!—Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me?
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story.—

[*March afar off, and Shot within.*

What warlike noise is this?

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from
Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'ercrows⁵¹ my spirit;
I cannot live to hear the news from England:
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents, more or less,
Which have solicited⁵²,—The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart;—Good night,
sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*

⁵¹ To *overcrow* is to overcome, to subdue. 'These noblemen laboured with tooth and naile to *overcrow*, and consequently to overthrow one another.'—*Holinshed's History of Ireland.*

⁵² 'The *occurrents* which have *solicited*'—the *occurrences* or *incidents* which have *incited*.' The sentence is left unfinished.

*Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors,
and Others.*

Fort. Where is this sight?

Hor. What is it, you would see?
If aught of woe, or wonder, cease your search.

Fort. This quarry cries on havoc⁵³!—O proud death!

What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes, at a shot,
So bloodily hast struck?

1 Amb. The sight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless, that should give us hearing,
To tell him, his commandment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:
Where should we have our thanks?

Hor. Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you;
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump⁵⁴ upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd; give order, that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak, to the yet unknowing world,
How these things came about: So shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts⁵⁵;

⁵³ 'This quarry cries on havoc!' To cry on was to exclaim against. I suppose when unfair sportsmen destroyed more game than was reasonable, the censure was to call it *havock*,

Johnson.

Quarry was the term used for a heap of slaughtered game. See *Macbeth*, Act iv. Sc. 3.

⁵⁴ It has been already observed that *jump* and *just*, or *exactly*, are synonymous. Vide note on Act i. Sc. 1, p. 160.

⁵⁵ 'Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts.' Of *sanguinary* and *unnatural* acts, to which the perpetrator was instigated by con-

Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters;
 Of deaths put on⁵⁶ by cunning, and forc'd cause;
 And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
 Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
 Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it.
 And call the noblest to the audience.
 For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune;
 I have some rights of memory⁵⁷ in this kingdom,
 Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
 And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more:
 But let this same be presently perform'd,
 Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mis-
 chance,

On plots and errors, happen.

Fort. Let four captains
 Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
 For he was likely, had he been put on,
 To have prov'd most royally: and, for his passage,
 The soldier's musick, and the rites of war,
 Speak loudly for him.—
 Take up the bodies:—Such a sight as this
 Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
 Go, bid the soldiers shoot. [A dead march.

[*Exeunt, bearing off the dead Bodies; after
 which, a Peal of Ordnance is shot off.*

cupiscence or 'carnal stings.' The allusion is to the murder of old Hamlet by his brother, previous to his incestuous union with Gertrude.

⁵⁶ i. e. instigated, produced. Instead of 'forced cause,' the quartos read 'for no cause.'

⁵⁷ i. e. some rights which are remembered in this kingdom.

The following scene in the first quarto, 1603, differs so materially from the revised play, that it has been thought it would not be unacceptable to the reader:—

Enter HORATIO and the Queen.

Hor. Madam, your son is safe arriv'd in Denmarke,
This letter I even now receiv'd of him,
Whereas he writes how he escap'd the danger,
And subtle treason that the king had plotted,
Being crossed by the contention of the winds,
He found the packet sent to the king of England,
Wherein he saw himself betray'd to death,
As at his next conversion with your grace
He will relate the circumstance at full.

Queen. Then I perceive there's treason in his looks,
That seem'd to sugar o'er his villanies:
But I will sooth and please him for a time,
For murderous minds are always jealous;
But know not you, Horatio, where he is?

Hor. Yes, madam, and he hath appointed me
To meet him on the east side of the city
To-morrow morning.

Queen. O fail not, good Horatio, and withal commend me
A mother's care to him, bid him a while
Be wary of his presence, lest that he
Fail in that he goes about.

Hor. Madam, never make doubt of that:
I think by this the news be come to court
He is arriv'd: observe the king, and you shall
Quickly find, Hamlet being here,
Things fell not to his mind.

Queen. But what became of Gilderstone and Rossencraft?

Hor. He being set ashore, they went for England,
And in the packet there writ down that doom
To be perform'd on them 'pointed for him:
And by great chance he had his father's seal,
So all was done without discovery.

Queen. Thanks be to heaven for blessing of the prince.
Horatio, once again I take my leave,
With thousand mother's blessings to my son.

Hor. Madam, adieu!

If the dramas of Shakspeare were to be characterised, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the tragedy of Hamlet the praise of variety. The incidents are so numerous, that the argument of the play would make a long tale. The scenes are interchangeably diversified with merriment and solemnity: with merriment that includes judicious and instructive observations; and solemnity not strained by poetical violence above the natural sentiments of man. New characters appear from time to time in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life and particular modes of conversation. The pretended madness of Hamlet causes much mirth, the mournful distraction of Ophelia fills the heart with tenderness, and every personage produces the effect intended, from the apparition that in the first Act chills the blood with horror, to the fop in the last, that exposes affectation to just contempt.

The conduct is perhaps not wholly secure against objections. The action is indeed for the most part in continual progression; but there are some scenes which neither forward nor retard it. Of the feigned madness of Hamlet there appears no adequate cause; for he does nothing which he might not have done with the reputation of sanity. He plays the madman most when he treats Ophelia with so much rudeness, which seems to be useless and wanton cruelty.

Hamlet is, through the whole piece, rather an instrument than an agent. After he has, by the stratagem of the play, convicted the King, he makes no attempt to punish him; and his death is at last effected by an incident which Hamlet had no part in producing.

The catastrophe is not very happily produced; the exchange of weapons is rather an expedient of necessity, than a stroke of art. A scheme might easily be formed to kill Hamlet with the dagger, and Laertes with the bowl.

The poet is accused of having shown little regard to poetical justice, and may be charged with equal neglect of poetical probability. The apparition left the regions of the dead to little purpose; the revenge which he demands is not obtained, but by the death of him that was required to take it; and the gratification which would arise from the destruction of an usurper and a murderer, is abated by the untimely death of Ophelia, the young, the beautiful, the harmless, and the pious.

JOHNSON.

OTHELLO.



Othello. I kiss'd thee, ere I kill'd thee.

Act v. Sc. 2.

FROM THE CHISWICK PRESS.

1896.

Othello, the Moor of Venice.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

THE story is taken from the collection of Novels, by Gio Giraldi Cinthio, entitled *Hecatommithi*, being the seventh novel of the third decad. No English translation of so early a date as the age of Shakspeare has hitherto been discovered: but the work was translated into French by Gabriel Chappuys, Paris, 1584. The version is not a faithful one; and Dr. Farmer suspects that through this medium the novel came into English.

The name of Othello may have been suggested by some tale which has escaped our researches, as it occurs in Reynolds's *God's Revenge against Adultery*, standing in one of his arguments as follows:—'She marries Othello, an old German soldier.' This history (the eighth) is professed to be an Italian one; and here also the name of Iago occurs. It is likewise found in *The History of the famous Euordanus, Prince of Denmark*; with the strange *Adventures of Iago, Prince of Saxonia*, 4to, 1605. It may indeed be urged, that these names were adopted from the tragedy before us: but every reader who is conversant with the peculiar style and method in which the work of honest John Reynolds is composed, will acquit him of the slightest familiarity with the scenes of Shakspeare.

STEEVENS.

The time of this play may be ascertained from the following circumstances:—Selymus the Second formed his design against Cyprus in 1569, and took it in 1571. This was the only attempt the Turks ever made upon that island after it came into the hands of the Venetians (which was in 1473), wherefore the time must fall in with some part of that interval. We learn from the play, that there was a junction of the Turkish fleet at Rhodes, in order for the invasion of Cyprus; that it first came sailing towards Cyprus; then went to Rhodes, there met another squadron, and then resumed its way to Cyprus. These are real historical facts, which happened when Mustapha, Selymus's general attacked Cyprus, in May, 1570; which is therefore the true period of this performance.—See Knolles's *History of the Turks*, p. 838, 846, 867.—REED.

The first edition of this play, of which we have any certain

knowledge, was printed by N. O. for Thomas Walkly, to whom it was entered on the Stationers' Books, October 6, 1621. The most material variations of this copy from the first folio are pointed out in the notes. The minute differences are so numerous, that to have specified them would only have fatigued the reader. Walkly's Preface will follow these Preliminary Remarks.

Malone first placed the date of the composition of this play in 1611, upon the ground of the allusion, supposed by Warburton, to the creation of the order of baronets. [See Act iii. Sc. 4, note 4.] On the same ground Mr. Chalmers attributed it to 1614; and Dr. Drake assigned the middle period of 1612. But this allusion being controverted, Malone subsequently affixed to it the date of 1604, because, as he asserts, 'we know it was acted in that year.' He has not stated the evidence for this decisive fact; and Mr. Boswell was unable to discover it among his papers; but gives full credit to it, on the ground that 'Mr. Malone never expressed himself at random.' The allusion to Pliny, translated by Philemon Holland, in 1601, in the simile of the Pontick Sea; and the supposed imitation of a passage in Cornwallis's Essays, of the same date, referred to in the note cited above, seem to have influenced Mr. Malone in settling the date of this play. What is more certain is, that it was played before King James at court, in 1613; which circumstance is gathered from the MSS. of Vertue the Engraver.

'If (says Schlegel) *Romeo and Juliet* shines with the colours of the dawn of morning, but a dawn whose purple clouds already announce the thunder of a sultry day, *Othello* is, on the other hand, a strongly shaded picture; we might call it a tragical Rembrandt.'

Should these parallels between pictorial representation and dramatic poetry be admitted,—for I have my doubts of their propriety,—this is a far more judicious ascription than that of Steevens, who, in a concluding note to this play, would compare it to a picture from the school of Raphael. Poetry is certainly the pabulum of art; and this drama, as every other of our immortal bard, offers a series of pictures to the imagination of such varied hues, that artists of every school might from hence be furnished with subjects. What Schlegel means to say appears to be, that it abounds in strongly contrasted scenes, but that gloom predominates.

Much has been written on the subject of this drama; and there has been some difference of opinion in regard to the rank in which it deserves to be placed. For my own part I should not hesitate to place it in the first. Perhaps this preference may arise from the circumstance of the domestic nature of its action, which lays a stronger hold upon our sympathy; for

overpowering as is the pathos of Lear, or the interest excited by Macbeth, it comes less near to the business of life.

In strong contrast of character, in delineation of the workings of passion in the human breast, in manifestations of profound knowledge of the inmost recesses of the heart, this drama exceeds all that has ever issued from mortal pen. It is indeed true that 'no eloquence is capable of painting the overwhelming catastrophe in Othello,—the pressure of feelings which measure out in a moment the abysses of eternity.'

WALKLY'S PREFACE TO OTHELLO,

ED. 1622, 4to.

THE STATIONER TO THE READER.

To set forth a booke without an Epistle, were like to the old English proverbe, '*A blew coat without a badge;*' and the author being dead, I thought good to take that piece of worke upon me: To commend it, I will not; for that which is good, I hope every man will commend without intreaty: and I am the bolder, because the Author's name is sufficient to vent his worke. Thus leaving every one to the liberty of judgment, I have ventured to print this play, and leave it the generall censure. Yours,

THOMAS WALKLY.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DUKE of VENICE.

BRABANTIO, a Senator.

Two other Senators.

GRATIANO, Brother to Brabantio.

LODOVICO, Kinsman to Brabantio.

OTHELLO, the Moor :

CASSIO, his Lieutenant ;

IAGO, his Ancient.

RODERIGO, a Venetian Gentleman.

**MONTANO, Othello's Predecessor in the Government of
Cyprus.**

Clown, Servant to Othello.

Herald.

DESDEMONA, Daughter to Brabantio, and Wife to Othello.

EMILIA, Wife to Iago.

BLANCA, a Courtesan, Mistress to Cassio.

**Officers, Gentlemen, Messengers, Musicians, Sailors,
Attendants, &c.**

**SCENE, for the first Act, in Venice ; during the rest of
the Play, at a Seaport in Cyprus.**

OTHELLO, THE MOOR OF VENICE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. Venice. *A Street.*

Enter RODERIGO and IAGO.

Roderigo.

TUSH, never tell me, I take it much unkindly,
That thou, Iago,—who hast had my purse,
As if the strings were thine,—should'st know of this.

Iago. 'Sblood, but you will not hear me:—
If ever I did dream of such a matter,
Abhor me.

Rod. Thou told'st me, thou didst hold him in thy
hate.

Iago. Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones
of the city,

In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Oft capp'd¹ to him;—and, by the faith of man,
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place:
But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them, with a bombast circumstance²,

¹ To *capp* is to salute by taking off the cap: it is still an academick phrase. The folio reads, 'Off-capp'd.'

² *Circumstance* signifies *circumlocution*.

'And therefore without *circumstance*, to the point,
Instruct me what I am?' *The Picture*, by Massinger.

Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war;
 And, in conclusion, nonsuits
 My mediators; *for, certes*, says he,
I have already chose my officer.
 And what was he?
 Forsooth, a great arithmetician³,
 One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
 A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife⁴;
 That never set a squadron in the field,
 Nor the division of a battle knows
 More than a spinster; unless the bookish theorick⁵,
 Wherein the toged consuls⁶ can propose

³ Iago means to represent Cassio as a man merely conversant with civil matters, and who knew no more of a squadron than the *number* of men it contained. He afterwards calls him 'this counter-caster.'

⁴ The folio reads, *dambd*. This passage has given rise to much discussion. Mr. Tyrwhitt thought that we should read, 'almost damn'd in a fair *life*;' alluding to the judgment denounced in the Gospel against those 'of whom all men speak well.' I should be contented to adopt his emendation, but with a different interpretation:—'A fellow almost damn'd (i.e. lost from luxurious habits) in the serene or equable tenour of his life.' The passage as it stands at present has been said by Steevens to mean, according to Iago's licentious manner of expressing himself, no more than a man 'very near being married.' This seems to have been the case in respect to Cassio. Act iv. Sc. 1, Iago, speaking to him of Bianca, says, 'Why, the cry goes that you shall marry her.' Cassio acknowledges that such a report had been raised, and adds—'This is the monkey's own giving out: she is persuaded I will marry her, out of her love and self flattery, not out of my promise.' Iago then, having heard this report before, very naturally alludes to it in his present conversation with Roderigo.—Mr. Boswell suspects that there may be some corruption in the text.

⁵ i.e. *theory*. See All's Well that Ends Well, Act iv. Sc. 3, p. 305.

⁶ 'The rulers of the state, or civil governors. The word is used in the same sense in Tamburlaine:—

'Both we will reign the *consuls* of the earth.'

By *toged* is meant *peaceable*, in opposition to *warlike* qualifications, of which he had been speaking. The word may be formed

As masterly as he: mere prattle, without practice,
Is all his soldiership. But, he, sir, had the election:
And I,—of whom his eyes had seen the proof,
At Rhodes, at Cyprus; and on other grounds
Christian and heathen,—must be be-lee'd and calm'd
By debtor and creditor, this counter-caster⁷;
He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
And I (God bless the mark!) his Moorship's ancient.

Rod. By heaven, I rather would have been his
hangman.

Iago. But there's no remedy, 'tis the curse of
service;

Preferment goes by letter⁸, and affection,
Not by the old gradation, where each second
Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself,
Whether I in any just term am affin'd⁹
To love the Moor.

Rod. I would not follow him then.

Iago. O, sir, content you;
I follow him to serve my turn upon him:
We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark
Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave,
That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,
Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,

in allusion to the adage, 'Cedant arma togæ.' The folio reads, 'tongued consuls,' which agrees better with the words which follow:—'mere prattle, without practice.'

⁷ It was anciently the practice to reckon up sums with counters. To this the poet alludes in *Cymbeline*, Act v.:—'It sums up thousands in a trice: you have no true debtor and creditor, but it; of what's past, is, and to come, the discharge. Your neck, sir, is pen, book, and counters.'

⁸ i. e. by recommendation.

⁹ 'Do I stand *within* any such terms of propinquity to the Moor, as that I am bound to love him.' The first quarto has *assign'd*.

For nought but provender; and, when he's old,
cashier'd;

Whip me such honest knaves¹⁰: Others there are,
Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves;
And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by them, and, when they have lin'd
their coats,

Do themselves homage: these fellows have some
soul;

And such a one do I profess myself.

For, sir,

It is as sure as you are Roderigo,

Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago:

In following him, I follow but myself:

Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,

But seeming so, for my peculiar end:

For when my outward action doth demonstrate

The native act and figure of my heart

In compliment extern¹¹, 'tis not long after

But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve

For daws¹² to peck at: I am not what I am.

Rod. What a full fortune¹³ does the thick-lips owe,
If he can carry't thus!

Iago. Call up her father,
Rouse him: make after him, poison his delight,

¹⁰ *Knave* is here used for *servant*, but with a sly mixture of contempt.

¹¹ Outward show of civility.

¹² This is the reading of the folio. The first quarto reads 'doves.'

¹³ *Full fortune* is complete good fortune: to owe is to possess. So in Antony and Cleopatra:—

' ——— not the imperious show
Of the *full-fortun'd* Cæsar.'

And in Cymbeline:—

' Our pleasure his *full fortune* doth confine.'

Proclaim him in the streets; incense her kinsmen,
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies: though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on't,
As it may lose some colour.

Rod. Here is her father's house; I'll call aloud.

Iago. Do; with like timorous accent, and dire yell,
As when, by ¹⁴ night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities.

Rod. What ho! Brabantio! signior Brabantio, ho!

Iago. Awake! what ho! Brabantio! thieves!
thieves! thieves!

Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags!
Thieves! thieves!

BRABANTIO, *above, at a Window.*

Bra. What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there?

Rod. Signior, is all your family within?

Iago. Are your doors lock'd?

Bra. Why? wherefore ask you this?

Iago. 'Zounds, sir, you are robb'd; for shame,
put on your gown:

Your heart is burst ¹⁵, you have lost half your soul;
Even now, very now, an old black ram
Is tuppung your white ewe. Arise, arise;
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you:
Arise, I say.

Bra. What, have you lost your wits?

Rod. Most reverend signior, do you know my
voice?

¹⁴ 'By night and negligence' means 'in the time of night and negligence.' Nothing is more common than this mode of expression: we should not hesitate at the expression, 'By night and day.'

¹⁵ i. e. is broken. See vol. iii. p. 342.

Bra. Not I; What are you?

Rod. My name is—Roderigo.

Bra. The worse welcome:
I have charg'd thee, not to haunt about my doors:
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say,
My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness,
Being full of supper, and distempering¹⁶ draughts,
Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come
To start my quiet.

Rod. Sir, sir, sir, sir,——

Bra. But thou must needs be sure,
My spirit, and my place, have in them power
To make this bitter to thee.

Rod. Patience, good sir.

Bra. What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is
Venice;

My house is not a grange¹⁷.

Rod. Most grave Brabantio,
In simple and pure soul I come to you.

Iago. 'Zounds, sir, you are one of those, that
will not serve God, if the devil bid you. Because
we come to do you service, you think we are ruf-
fians: You'll have your daughter covered with a
Barbary horse; you'll have your nephews¹⁸ neigh
to you: you'll have coursers for cousins, and gen-
nets for germans¹⁹.

¹⁶ That is 'intoxicating draughts.' In Hamlet the king is said to be 'marvellous *distemper'd* with wine.' See King Henry V. Act ii. Sc. 2, p. 424.

¹⁷ That is, we are in a populous city, mine is not a *lone house*, where a robbery might easily be committed. *Grange* is, strictly, the farm of a monastery; *grangia*, Lat. from *granum*: but, provincially, any lone house or solitary farm is called a *grange*. So in Measure for Measure:—'At the moated *grange* resides this dejected Mariana.'

¹⁸ *Nephews* here mean *grandchildren*. See King Henry VI. Part i. p. 41; and King Richard III. p. 84.

¹⁹ i. e. horses for relations. A *gennet* is a Spanish or Barbary horse.

Bra. What profane²⁰ wretch art thou?

Iago. I am one, sir, that comes to tell you, your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs²¹.

Bra. Thou art a villain.

Iago. You are—a senator.

Bra. This thou shalt answer: I know thee, Roderigo.

Rod. Sir, I will answer any thing. But I beseech you,

[If't be your pleasure, and most wise consent,
(As partly, I find, it is), that your fair daughter,
At this odd-even²² and dull watch o'the night,
Transported—with no worse nor better guard,
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,—
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor,—
If this be known to you, and your allowance²³,
We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;
But if you know not this, my manners tell me,
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe,
That, from²⁴ the sense of all civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence:
Your daughter,—if you have not given her leave,—

²⁰ A *profane* wretch is an *unlucky* or a *wicked* one. See vol. v. p. 384, note 4.

²¹ *Faire la bête à deux dos* is a French proverbial expression, which needs no explanation. See the notes to any edition of Rabelais, or Le Roux's *Dictionnaire Comique*.

²² This *odd-even* appears to mean the interval between *twelve* at night and *one* in the morning. So in *Macbeth*:—

‘ ——— What is the night?

Lady M. Almost at *odds* with morning, which is which.’

²³ i. e. your *approbation*.

²⁴ That is, in *opposition to* or *departing from* the sense of all civility. So in *Twelfth Night*:—

‘ But this is *from* my commission.’

And in *The Mayor of Queenborough*, by Middleton, 1661:—

‘ But this is *from* my business.’

I say again, hath made a gross revolt;
 Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes,
 In an extravagant²⁵ and wheeling stranger,
 Of here and every where: Straight satisfy yourself:]
 If she be in her chamber, or your house,
 Let loose on me the justice of the state
 For thus deluding you.

Bra. Strike on the tinder, ho!
 Give me a taper;—call up all my people:—
 This accident is not unlike my dream,
 Belief of it oppresses me already:—
 Light, I say! light! [*Exit, from above.*]

Iago. Farewell; for I must leave you:
 It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,
 To be produc'd (as, if I stay, I shall),
 Against the Moor: For, I do know, the state,—
 However this may gall him with some check²⁶,—
 Cannot with safety cast²⁷ him; for he's embark'd
 With such loud reason to the Cyprus' wars
 (Which even now stand in act), that, for their souls,
 Another of his fathom they have not,
 To lead their business: in which regard,
 Though I do hate him as I do hell pains,
 Yet, for necessity of present life,
 I must show out a flag and sign of love,
 Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely
 find him,
 Lead to the Sagittary the rais'd search;
 And there will I be with him. So, farewell. [*Exit.*]

²⁵ *Extravagant* is here again used in its Latin sense, for *wandering*. Thus in *Hamlet*:—'The *extravagant* and erring spirit.' Sir Henry Wootton thus uses it:—'These two accidents, precisely true, and known to few, I have reported as not altogether *extravagant* from my purpose.' *Parallel, &c. between Buckingham and Essex*.—*In* is here used for *on*, a common substitution in ancient phraseology. Pope and others, not aware of this, altered it, and read, 'To an extravagant,' &c.

²⁶ i. e. some rebuke.

²⁷ That is, dismiss him, reject him.

Enter below, BRABANTIO, and Servants with Torches.

Bra. It is too true an evil: gone she is:
And what's to come of my despised time²⁸,
Is nought but bitterness.—Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her?—O, unhappy girl!—
With the Moor, say'st thou?—Who would be a
father?—

How didst thou know 'twas she? O, thou deceiv'st me
Past thought!—What said she to you?—Get more
tapers;

Raise all my kindred.—Are they married think you?

Rod. Truly, I think, they are.

Bra. O heaven!—How got she out!—O treason
of the blood!—

Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds
By what you see them act,—Is there not charms²⁹,
By which the property of youth and maidhood
May be abus'd³⁰? Have you not read, Roderigo,
Of some such thing?

Rod. Yes, sir; I have indeed.

Bra. Call up my brother.—O, that you had had
her!—

Some one way, some another.—Do you know
Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?

²⁸ *Despised time* is time of no value: time in which
'There's nothing serious in mortality;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere dregs
Are left this vault to brag of.'

So in *Romeo and Juliet*:—

'——— expire the term
Of a *despised* life clos'd in my breast.'

²⁹ 'Is there not charms,' &c. mean Is there not *such a thing*
as charms? The second folio reads, 'Are there not,' &c.

³⁰ i. e. may be *illuded* or *deceived*.

'——— wicked dreams *abuse*
The curtain'd sleeper.'

Macbeth.

Rod. I think, I can discover him; if you please
To get good guard, and go along with me.

Bra. 'Pray you, lead on. At every house I'll call;
I may command at most;—Get weapons, ho!
And raise some special officers of night.—
On, good Roderigo;—I'll deserve your pains.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The same. Another Street.*

Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and Attendants.

Iago. Though in the trade of war I have slain men,
Yet do I hold it very stuff¹ o'the conscience,
To do no contriv'd murder; I lack iniquity
Sometimes, to do me service: Nine or ten time
I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the ribs.

Oth. 'Tis better as it is.

Iago. Nay, but he prated²,
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
Against your honour,
That, with the little godliness I have,
I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray, sir,
Are you fast married? for, be sure of this,—
That the magnifico³ is much beloved;
And hath, in his effect, a voice potential⁴
As double as the duke's; he will divorce you;

¹ This expression to common readers appears harsh. *Stuff* of the conscience is *substance* or *essence* of the conscience. Shakspeare uses the word in the same sense, and in a manner yet more harsh in *Macbeth*:—

'Cleanse the *stuff'd* bosom of that perilous *stuff*.'

² 'Of whom is this said?—Of Roderigo.'—*Steevens*.

³ The chief men of Venice are by a peculiar name called *magnifici*, i. e. *magnificoes*. See Ben Jonson's *Volpone*.

⁴ i. e. as mighty, as powerful: as *double* means as *strong*, as *forcible*, as double in effect as that of the doge, whose voice of course carried great sway with it, and who is said to have had extraordinary privileges, influencing every court and council of the state.

Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
The law (with all his might, to enforce it on),
Will give him cable.

Oth. Let him do his spite:
My services, which I have done the signiory,
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to know,
(Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,
I shall promulgate), I fetch my life and being
From men of royal siege⁵; and my demerits⁶
May speak, unbonneted⁷, to as proud a fortune.
As this that I have reach'd: For know, Iago,
But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
I would not my unhoused⁸ free condition
Put into circumscription and confine
For the sea's worth⁹. But, look! what lights come
yonder?

⁵ 'Men who have sat upon royal *thrones*.' So in Grafton's Chronicle, p. 443:—'Incontinent, after that he was placed in the royal siege,' &c.

⁶ *Demerits* has the same meaning in Shakspeare as *merits*. *Mereo* and *demereo* had the same meaning in the Roman language. 'Demerit (says Bullokar), a *desert*; also (on the contrary, and as it is most commonly used at this day) *ill-deserving*.' See Coriolanus, p. 131.

⁷ Mr. Fuseli (and who was better acquainted with the sense and spirit of Shakspeare?) explains this passage as follows:—'I am his equal or superior in rank; and were it not so, such are my *merits*, that *unbonneted*, without the addition of patrician or senatorial dignity, they may speak to as proud a fortune,' &c. At Venice the *bonnet*, as well as the *toge*, is a badge of aristocratic honours to this day.

⁸ i. e. *unsettled*, free from *domestic cares*.

⁹ Pliny, the naturalist, has a chapter on *the riches of the sea*. The expression seems to have been proverbial. Thus in Davenant's Cruel Brother, 1630:—

'—— he would not lose that privilege
For the sea's worth.'

So in King Henry V. Act i.:—

'—— As rich with praise,
As is the ooze and bottom of the sea
With *sunken wreck* and *sumless treasures*.'

Enter CASSIO, at a Distance, and certain Officers with Torches.

Iago. These are the raised father, and his friends:
You were best go in.

Oth. Not I: I must be found;
My parts, my title, and my perfect soul,
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they?

Iago. By Janus, I think no.

Oth. The servants of the duke, and my lieutenant.
The goodness of the night upon you, friends¹⁰!
What is the news?

Cas. The duke does greet you, general;
And he requires your haste, post-haste¹¹ appearance,
Even on the instant.

Oth. What is the matter, think you?

Cas. Something from Cyprus, as I may divine;
It is a business of some heat: the galleys
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers
This very night at one another's heels;
And many of the consuls¹², rais'd, and met,
Are at the duke's already: You have been hotly
call'd for;

When, being not at your lodging to be found,
The senate hath sent about three several quests¹³,
To search you out.

Oth. 'Tis well I am found by you.
I will but spend a word here in the house,
And go with you. [Exit.

¹⁰ So in *Measure for Measure*:—

'The best and wholesomest spirits of the night
Envelop you, good provost!'

¹¹ These words were ordinarily written on the covers of letters or packets requiring the most prompt and speedy conveyance. Often reduplicated thus:—*Haste, haste, haste, post-haste!*

¹² See note 6, on Scene 1, p. 256.

¹³ Quests are here put for messengers; properly it signified searchers. Vide Cotgrave, in *questeur*.

Cas. Ancient, what makes he here?

Iago. 'Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land carrack¹⁴;

If it prove lawful prize, he's made for ever.

Cas. I do not understand.

Iago. He's married.

Cas. To who¹⁵?

Re-enter OTHELLO.

Iago. Marry, to—Come, captain, will you go?

Oth. Have with you.

Cas. Here comes another troop to seek for you.

Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, and Officers of Night, with Torches and Weapons.

Iago. It is Brabantio:—general, be advis'd¹⁶;
He comes to bad intent.

Oth. Hola! stand there!

Rod. Signior, it is the Moor.

Bra. Down with him, thief!
[*They draw on both sides.*

Iago. You, Roderigo! come, sir, I am for you.

Oth. Keep up your bright swords, for the dew
will rust them.—

Good signior, you shall more command with years,
Than with your weapons.

Bra. O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd
my daughter?

¹⁴ A *carrack*, or *carrick*, was a ship of great burthen, a Spanish galeon; so named from *carico*, a lading, or freight.

¹⁵ In the third scene of the third act Iago says:—
'Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,
Know of your love?

Oth. From first to last.'

Cassio's seeming ignorance might therefore only be affected in order to keep his friend's secret till it became publicly known.

¹⁶ i. e. be cautious, be discreet.

Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her :
 For I'll refer me to all things of sense,
 If she in chains of magick were not bound,
 Whether a maid—so tender, fair, and happy;
 So opposite to marriage, that she shunn'd
 The wealthy curled¹⁷ darlings of our nation,
 Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
 Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
 Of such a thing as thou : to fear, not to delight¹⁸.
 [Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense¹⁹,
 That thou hast practis'd on her with foul charms;
 Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,
 That waken motion²⁰ :—I'll have it disputed on;
 'Tis probable, and palpable to thinking.

¹⁷ Sir W. Davenant uses the same expression in his *Just Italian*, 1630:—

‘ The *curl'd* and silken nobles of the town.’

Again:—

‘ Such as the *curled* youth of Italy.’

It was the fashion of the poet's time for lusty gallants to wear ‘ a *curled* bush of frizzled hair.’ See Hall's *Satires*, ed. 1824, book iii. sat. 5. Shakspeare has in other places alluded to the fashion of curling the hair among persons of rank and fashion. Speaking of Tarquin, in *The Rape of Lucrece*, he says;—

‘ Let him have time to tear his *curled* hair.’

And Edgar, in *Lear*, when he was ‘ proud in heart and mind,’ *curled his hair*. Turnus, in the twelfth *Æneid*, speaking of *Æneas*, says:—

‘ ——— *foedare in pulvere crines*
Vibratos calido ferre.’

¹⁸ ‘ Of such a thing as thou : a thing to fear (i. e. terrify), not to delight.’ So in the next scene :—

‘ To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on.’

¹⁹ The lines in crotchets are not in the first edition, 4to. 1622.

²⁰ The old copy reads, ‘ That *weaken* motion.’ The emendation is Hanmer's. *Motion* is elsewhere used by our poet precisely in the sense required here. So in *Measure for Measure*:

‘ ——— one who never feels

The wanton stings and *motions* of the sense.’

And in a subsequent scene of this play :—‘ But we have reason

I therefore apprehend and do attach thee,]
 For an abuser of the world, a practiser
 Of arts inhibited and out of warrant:—
 Lay hold upon him; if he do resist,
 Subdue him at his peril.

Oth. Hold your hands,
 Both you of my inclining, and the rest:
 Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
 Without a prompter.—Where will you that I go
 To answer this your charge?

Bra. To prison: till fit time
 Of law, and course of direct session,
 Call thee to answer.

Oth. What if I do obey?
 How may the duke be therewith satisfied;
 Whose messengers are here about my side,
 Upon some present business of the state,
 To bring me to him?

Off. 'Tis true, most worthy signior,
 The duke's in council; and your noble self,
 I am sure, is sent for.

Bra. How! the duke in council!
 In this time of the night!—Bring him away:
 Mine's not an idle cause: the duke himself,
 Or any of my brothers of the state,
 Cannot but feel this wrong, as 'twere their own:
 For if such actions may have passage free,
 Bond-slaves, and pagans²¹, shall our statesmen be.

[*Exeunt.*

to cool our raging *motions*, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts.'
 So in *A Mad World, my Masters*, by Middleton, 1608:—

'And in myself sooth up adulterous *motions*.'
 To *waken* is to *incite*, to *stir up*. We have in the present play,
 '*waken'd* wrath.' And in Shakspeare's 117th Sonnet, '*waken'd*
 hate.' Brabantio afterwards asserts:—

'That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood
 He wrought upon her.'

²¹ This passage has been completely misunderstood. Pagan

SCENE III. *The same. A Council Chamber.*

*The Duke, and Senators, sitting at a Table;
Officers attending.*

Duke. There is no composition¹ in these news,
That gives them credit.

1 Sen. Indeed, they are disproportion'd;
My letters say, a hundred and seven galleys.

Duke. And mine, a hundred and forty.

2 Sen. And mine, two hundred:
But though they jump not on a just account,
(As in these cases, where the aim² reports,
'Tis oft with difference), yet do they all confirm
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.

Duke. Nay, it is possible enough to judgment;
I do not so secure me in the error,
But the main article I do approve
In fearful sense.

Sailor. [*Within.*] What ho! what ho! what ho!

was a word of contempt; and the reason will appear from its etymology:—'*Paganus, villanus vel incultus. Et derivatur a pagus quod est villa. Et quicunque habitat in villa est paganus. Præterea quicunque est extra civitatem Dei, i. e. ecclesiam, dicitur paganus. Anglice, a paynim.*'—*Ortus Vocabulorum*, 1528. I know not whether *pagan* was ever used to designate a clown or rustic; but *paganical* and *paganalian*, in a kindred sense, were familiar to our elder language. Malone thinks that 'Brabantio is meant to allude to the common condition of all blacks, who come from their own country both *slaves* and *pagans*; and that he uses the word in contempt of Othello. If he is suffered to escape with impunity, we may expect to see all our offices of state filled up by the *pagans* and bond-slaves of Africa.'

¹ *Composition* for consistency. It has been before observed that *news* was considered of the plural number by our ancestors.

² *Aim* is *guess, conjecture*. The quarto reads, '*they aim reports.*' The meaning appears to be, 'In these cases where *conjecture* tells the tale.'—*Aim* is again used as a substantive in Julius Cæsar:—

'What you would work me to, I have some *aim*.'

See also vol. i. p. 137.

Enter an Officer, with a Sailor.

Off. A messenger from the galleys.

Duke. Now? the business?

Sailor. The Turkish preparation makes for Rhodes;
So was I bid report here to the state,
By signior Angelo.

Duke. How say you by this change?

1 Sen. This cannot be,

By no assay of reason³; 'tis a pageant,
To keep us in false gaze: When we consider
The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk;
And let ourselves again but understand,
That, as it more concerns the Turk than Rhodes,
So may he with more facile question⁴ bear it,
[For that it stands not in such warlike brace⁵,
But altogether lacks the abilities
That Rhodes is dress'd in:—if we make thought of
this,

We must not think, the Turk is so unskilful,
To leave that latest which concerns him first;
Neglecting an attempt of ease, and gain,
To wake, and wage⁶, a danger profitless.]

Duke. Nay, in all confidence, he's not for Rhodes.

Off. Here is more news.

³ 'Bring it to the test, examine it by reason, it will be found counterfeit.'

⁴ That he may carry it with *less dispute*, with diminished opposition.

⁵ i. e. in such *state of defence*. To arm was called to *brace on* the armour. The seven following lines were added since the first edition in quarto, 1622.

⁶ To *wage* is to *undertake*. 'To *wage law* (in the common acceptation) seems to be to *follow*, to *urge*, drive on, or prosecute the law or law-suits; as to *wage war* is *præliari*, *bellare*, to drive on the war, to fight in battels as warriors do.'—*Blount's Glossography*. See *King Lear*, p. 386, note 25.

Enter a Messenger.

Mes. The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,
Steering with due course toward the isle of Rhodes,
Have there injointed them with an after fleet.

1 Sen. Ay, so I thought:—How many, as you
guess?

Mess. Of thirty sail: and now do they restem
Their backward course, bearing with frank appear-
ance

Their purposes toward Cyprus.—Signior Montano,
Your trusty and most valiant servitor,
With his free duty recommends you thus,
And prays you to believe him⁷.

Duke. 'Tis certain then for Cyprus,—
Marcus Lucchesé, is he not in town?

1 Sen. He's now in Florence.

Duke. Write from us; wish⁸ him post-post-haste:
despatch.

1 Sen. Here comes Brabantio, and the valiant
Moor.

*Enter BRABANTIO, OTHELLO, IAGO, RODERIGO,
and Officers.*

Duke. Valiant Othello, we must straight employ
you
Against the general enemy Ottoman⁹.

⁷ 'He entreats you not to doubt the truth of this intelligence.'

⁸ i. e. 'desire him to make all possible haste.' The folio reads:—

'Write from us to him, post, post-haste, dispatch.'

⁹ It was part of the policy of the Venetian state to employ strangers, and even Moors, in their wars. 'By lande they are served of straungers, both for generals, for capitaines, and for all other men of warre, because theyr lawe permitteth not any Venetian to be capitaine over an armie by lande; fearing, I thinke, Cæsar's example.'—*Thomas's History of Italye*, p. 82. See also Contareni's Republic of Venice, by Lewkenor, 1599; and Howell's Letters, sect. i, let. xxviii.

I did not see you; welcome, gentle signior;

[To BRABANTIO.

We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.

Bra. So did I yours: Good your grace, pardon me;
Neither my place, nor aught I heard of business,
Hath rais'd me from my bed; nor doth the general
care¹⁰

Take hold on me; for my particular grief
Is of so flood-gate and o'erbearing nature,
That it engluts and swallows other sorrows,
And it is still itself.

Duke. Why, what's the matter?

Bra. My daughter! O, my daughter!

Sen. Dead?

Bra. Ay, to me;

She is abus'd, stol'n from me, and corrupted
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks¹¹:
For nature so preposterously to err,
Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense¹²,
Sans witchcraft could not——

Duke. Whoe'er he be, that, in this foul proceeding,
Hath thus beguil'd your daughter of herself,
And you of her, the bloody book of law
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter,

¹⁰ '——— juvenumque prodis
Publica cura.' *Hor.*

Steevens would read this line thus:—

'Rais'd me from bed; nor doth the general care—'
omitting *Hath* and *my*, which he considers playhouse interpo-
lations; by which, he says, the metre of this tragedy is too fre-
quently deranged.

¹¹ By the Venetian law the giving love-potions was highly
criminal, as appears in the Code Della Promission del Malefico,
cap. xvii. *Dei Maleficii et Herbarie*. Shakspeare may not have
known this; but he was well acquainted with the edicts of
James I. against

'——— practisers
Of arts inhibited, and out of warrant.'

¹² This line is not in the first quarto.

After your own sense; yea, though our proper son
Stood in your action¹³.

Bra. Humbly I thank your grace.
Here is the man, this Moor; whom now, it seems,
Your special mandate, for the state affairs,
Hath hither brought.

Duke & Sen. We are very sorry for it.

Duke. What, in your own part, can you say to
this? [To OTHELLO.]

Bra. Nothing, but this is so.

Oth. Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approved good masters,
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true; true, I have married her;
The very head and front of my offending¹⁴
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,
And little bless'd with the set¹⁵ phrase of peace;
For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
Till now some nine moons wasted, they have us'd
Their dearest action¹⁶ in the tented field;
And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle;
And therefore little shall I grace my cause,
In speaking of myself: Yet, by your gracious pa-
tience,

¹³ 'Though our own son were the man exposed to your charge or accusation.

¹⁴ The *main*, the *whole* unextenuated. '*Frons causæ not satis honesta est*' is a phrase used by Quintilian. A similar expression is found in Tamburlaine, 1590:—

'The man that in the *forehead* of his fortunes
Beares figures of renown and miracle.'

Again in Troilus and Cressida:—

'So rich advantage of a promis'd glory
As smiles upon the *forehead* of this action.'

¹⁵ The folio reads, '*soft* phrase of peace.'

¹⁶ 'Their *dearest* action;' that is, as we should say in modern language, their *best exertion*. For the force of the word *dearest* the reader may refer to vol. i. p. 382, note 5.

I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver
Of my whole course of love; what drugs, what
charms,

What conjuration, and what mighty magick
(For such proceeding I am charg'd withal),
I won his daughter with¹⁷.

Bra. A maiden never bold;
Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion
Blush'd at herself¹⁸; And she,—in spite of nature,
Of years, of country, credit, every thing,—
To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on?
It is a judgment maim'd, and most imperfect,
That will confess—perfection so could err
Against all rules of nature; and must be driven
To find out practices of cunning hell,
Why this should be. I therefore vouch again,
That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
Or with some dram conjur'd to this effect,
He wrought upon her.

Duke. To vouch this, is no proof;
Without more certain and more overt test¹⁹,
Than these thin habits, and poor likelihoods
Of modern seeming²⁰, do prefer against him.

1 *Sen.* But, Othello, speak:—
Did you by indirect and forced courses
Subdue and poison this young maid's affections?

¹⁷ The word *with*, supplied in the second folio, is wanting in the older copies. Malone contends that it is merely an elliptical form of expression, and that the early copies are right.

¹⁸ Shakspeare, like other writers of his age, frequently uses the *personal* instead of the *neutral* pronoun.

¹⁹ Open proofs, external evidence.

²⁰ i. e. weak show of slight appearance. *Modern* is frequently used for *trifling*, *slight*, or trivial, by Shakspeare. The first quarto reads:—

' *These are thin habits, and poore likelyhoods
Of modern seemings you prefer against him.*'

Or came it by request, and such fair question
As soul to soul affordeth?

Oth. I do beseech you,
Send for the lady to the Sagittary²¹,
And let her speak of me before her father:
If you do find me foul in her report,
The trust, the office, I do hold of you²²,
Not only take away, but let your sentence
Even fall upon my life.

Duke. Fetch Desdemona hither.

Oth. Ancient, conduct them; you best know the
place.— [*Exeunt IAGO and Attendants.*]
And, till she come, as truly²³ as to heaven
I do confess the vices of my blood,
So justly to your grave ears I'll present
How I did thrive in this fair lady's love,
And she in mine.

Duke. Say it, Othello.

Oth. Her father lov'd me; oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life,
From year to year; the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have pass'd.
I ran it through, even from my boyish days,
To the very moment that he bade me tell it.
Wherein I spoke of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents, by flood, and field:
Of hair-breadth scapes i' the imminent deadly breach;
Of being taken by the insolent foe,
And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence,
And portance²⁴ in my travel's history:

²¹ The sign of the fictitious creature so called. See *Troilus and Cressida*, Act v. Sc. 5, p. 453.

²² This line is wanting in the first quarto.

²³ The first quarto reads, as *faithful*: the next line is omitted in that copy.

²⁴ The first quarto reads:—

'And with it all my travel's history.'

By 'my portance in my travel's history,' perhaps, is meant, my

Wherein of antres²⁵ vast, and deserts wild²⁶,
 Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch
 heaven,

It was my hint to speak, such was the process ;
 And of the cannibals that each other eat,
 The anthropophagi, and men whose heads
 Do grow beneath their shoulders²⁷. These things
 to hear,

carriage or *behaviour* in my travels, as described in my narration of them. *Portance* is a word used in *Coriolanus* :—

‘ ——— took from you

The apprehension of his present *portance*,

Which gibingly, ungravely, he did fashion,’ &c.

Spenser likewise uses it, *Faerie Queene*, b. ii. c. 3 :—

‘ But for in court gay *portaunce* he perceiv’d.’

²⁵ i. e. caverns ; from *antrum*, Lat. Warburton observes that Rymer ridicules this whole circumstance ; and Shaftesbury obliquely sneers at it. Whoever (says Johnson) ridicules this account of the progress of love, shows his ignorance not only of history, but of nature and manners. It is no wonder that, in any age, or in any nation, a lady, recluse, timorous, and delicate, should desire to hear of events and scenes which she could never see, and should admire the man who had endured dangers, and performed actions, which, however great, were magnified by her timidity.

²⁶ The quarto and first folio read ‘ desarts *idle* ;’ the second folio reads ‘ desarts *wilde* ;’ and this reading was adopted by Pope ; at which Dr. Johnson expresses his surprise.

‘ Mr. Malone taxes the editor of the second folio with ignorance of Shakspeare’s meaning ; and *idle* is triumphantly reinstated in the text. It does not seem to have occurred to the commentators that *wild* might add a feature of some import, even to a desert ; whereas *idle*, i. e. *sterile*, leaves it just as it found it, and is (without a pun) the *idlest* epithet which could be applied. Mr. Pope, too, had an ear for rhythm ; and as his reading has some touch of Shakspeare, which the other has not, and is besides better poetry, I should hope that it would one day resume its proper place in the text.’—*Gifford. Notes on Sejanus. Ben Jonson’s Works*, vol. iii. p. 14.—I have followed the suggestion of Mr. Gifford, and restored the reading of the second folio ; convinced by his reasoning, and believing that *idle* might easily be substituted for *wilde*, in the earlier copies, by a mere typographical error.

²⁷ Nothing excited more universal attention than the accounts

Would Desdemona seriously incline :
 But still the house affairs would draw her thence ;
 Which ever as she could with haste despatch,
 She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
 Devour up my discourse : Which I observing,
 Took once a pliant hour ; and found good means
 To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart,
 That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
 Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
 But not intentively ²⁸ : I did consent ;
 And often did beguile her of her tears,
 When I did speak of some distressful stroke,
 That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,
 She gave me for my pains a world of sighs :
 She swore ²⁹,—In faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing
 strange ;

'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful :
 She wish'd, she had not heard it ; yet she wish'd
 That heaven had made her such a man : she thank'd
 me ;

brought by Sir Walter Raleigh, on his return from his celebrated voyage to Guiana in 1595, of the cannibals, amazons, and especially of the nation—

' ——— whose heads

Do grow beneath their shoulders.'

See his Narrative in Hackluyt's Voyages, vol. iii. ed. 1600, fol. p. 652, et seq. and p. 677, &c. A short extract of the more wonderful passages was also published in Latin and in several other languages, in 1599, adorned with copper-plates, representing these cannibals, amazons, and headless people, &c. A copy of one of the plates is given in the variorum editions of Shakespeare. These extraordinary reports were universally credited ; and Othello therefore assumes no other character but what was very common among the celebrated commanders of the poet's time.

²⁸ *Intention* and *attention* were once synonymous. '*Intentive*, which listeneth well and is earnestly bent to a thing,' says Bullokar, in his *Expositor*, 1616.

²⁹ To *aver upon faith* or *honour* was considered swearing, equally with a solemn appeal to God. See Whitaker's *Vindication of Mary Queen of Scots*, vol. ii. p. 487.

And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint, I spake:
She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd;
And I lov'd her, that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have us'd;
Here comes the lady, let her witness it.

Enter DESDEMONA, IAGO, and Attendants.

Duke. I think, this tale would win my daughter
too.—

Good Brabantio,
Take up this mangled matter at the best:
Men do their broken weapons rather use,
Than their bare hands.

Bra. I pray you, hear her speak;
If she confess, that she was half the wooer,
Destruction on my head, if my bad blame
Light on the man!—Come hither, gentle mistress;
Do you perceive in all this noble company,
Where most you owe obedience?

Des. My noble father,
I do perceive here a divided duty:
To you, I am bound for life, and education;
My life, and education, both do learn me
How to respect you; you are the lord of duty,
I am hitherto your daughter: But here's my husband;
And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor, my lord.

Bra. God be with you!—I have done:—
Please it your grace, on to the state affairs;
I had rather to adopt a child, than get it.—
Come hither, Moor:
I here do give thee that with all my heart,

Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart
I would keep from thee.—For your sake, jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child;
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them.—I have done, my lord.

Duke. Let me speak like yourself³⁰; and lay a
sentence,

Which, as a grise³¹, or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour.

When remedies are past, the griefs are ended³²,
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended,
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone,
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.

What cannot be preserv'd when fortune takes,
Patience her injury a mockery makes.

The robb'd, that smiles, steals something from the
thief;

He robs himself, that spends a bootless grief.

Bra. So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile;
We lose it not, so long as we can smile.

He bears the sentence well, that nothing bears
But the free comfort which from thence he hears:
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow,
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.
These sentences, to sugar, or to gall,
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal:

³⁰ i. e. 'let me speak as yourself would speak, were you not too much heated with passion.'—*Sir J. Reynolds.*

³¹ *Grise* or *greese* is a *step*; from *grés*, French. The word occurs again in *Timon of Athens*:—

' ——— for every *grize* of fortune
Is smooth'd by that below.'

Ben Jonson, in his *Sejanus*, has *degrees* in the same sense:—

' Whom when we saw lie spread on the *degrees*.'

³² This is expressed in a common proverbial form in *Love's Labour's Lost*:—

' Past cure is still past care.'

But words are words; I never yet did hear,
That the bruis'd heart was pierced through the ear³³.
I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of state.

Duke. The Turk with a most mighty preparation
makes for Cyprus:—Othello, the fortitude of the
place is best known to you: And though we have
there a substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet
opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a
more safer voice on you; you must therefore be
content to slubber³⁴ the gloss of your new fortunes
with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition.

Oth. The tyrant custom, most grave senators,
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
My thrice-driven bed of down³⁵: I do agnize³⁶
A natural and prompt alacrity,
I find in hardness; and do undertake
These present wars against the Ottomites.

³³ i. e. 'that the wounds of sorrow were ever cured by the words of 'consolation.' *Pierced* is here used for *penetrated*. Spenser has employed the word in the same figurative sense, *Faerie Queene*, b. vi. c. 9:—

'Whose senseful words empierst his hart so neare
That he was rapt with double ravishment.'

So in his fourth book, c. viii.:—

'Her words——

Which passing through the eares, would pierce the hart.'

³⁴ To *slubber* here means to *obscure*. So in Jeronimo, 1605, first part:—

'The evening too begins to *slubber* the day.'

The latter part of this metaphor has already occurred in *Macbeth*:—

'—— golden opinions——

Which should be worn now in their *newest gloss*.'

³⁵ A *driven bed* is a bed for which the feathers have been selected by *driving* with a fan, which separates the light from the heavy.

³⁶ To *agnize* is to acknowledge, confess, or avow. Thus in a *Summarie Report, &c.* of the Speaker relative to Mary Queen of Scots, 4to. 1586:—'A repentant convert *agnizing* her Majesty's great mercie,' &c. It sometimes signified 'to know by some token, to admit, or allow.'

Most humbly therefore bending to your state,
 I crave fit disposition for my wife;
 Due reference of place, and exhibition³⁷.
 With such accommodation, and besort,
 As levels with her breeding.

Duke. If you please,
 Be't at her father's.

Bra. I'll not have it so.

Oth. Nor I.

Des. Nor I; I would not there reside,
 To put my father in impatient thoughts,
 By being in his eye. Most gracious duke,
 To my unfolding lend a gracious ear³⁸;
 And let me find a charter in your voice³⁹,
 To assist my simpleness.

Duke. What would you, Desdemona?

Des. That I did love the Moor to live with him,
 My downright violence and storm of fortunes⁴⁰
 May trumpet to the world; my heart's subdued
 Even to the very quality⁴¹ of my lord:

³⁷ 'I desire that proper *disposition* be made for my wife, that she may have a *fit place appointed for her residence*, and such *allowance*, accommodation, and *attendance* as befits her rank.' *Exhibition for allowance* has already occurred in *King Lear*, and in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

³⁸ Thus in the quarto 1622. The folio, to avoid the repetition of the same epithet, reads:—

' ——— Most gracious duke,
 To my unfolding lend a *prosperous* ear.'

i. e. a *propitious* ear.

³⁹ That is, 'let your favour *privilege* me.'

⁴⁰ By her '*downright violence and storm of fortunes*' Desdemona means, the bold and decisive measure she had taken, of following the dictates of passion, and giving herself to the Moor, regardless of her parent's displeasure, the forms of her country, and the future inconveniences she might be subject to, by 'tying her duty, beauty, wit, and *fortunes*, in an extravagant and wheeling stranger, of here and every where.' This was truly taking her fortunes by storm.

⁴¹ *Quality* here, as in other passages of Shakspeare, means

I saw Othello's visage in his mind;
 And to his honours, and his valiant parts,
 Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.
 So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,
 A moth of peace, and he go to the war,
 The rites, for which I love him, are bereft me,
 And I a heavy interim shall support
 By his dear absence: Let me go with him.

Oth. Your voices, lords—'beseech you, let her
 will

Have a free way.

Vouch with me, heaven; I therefore beg it not,
 To please the palate of my appetite;
 Nor to comply with heat (the young affects,
 In me defunct) and proper satisfaction⁴²;

profession. 'My heart is so entirely devoted to Othello, that I will even encounter the dangers of his military profession with him.' The quarto reads, 'My heart's subdued even to the utmost pleasure of my lord.'

⁴² Steevens reads, at the suggestion of Sir T. Hanmer:—

'Nor to comply with heat, the young affects,

In my *distinct* and proper satisfaction.'

Malone reads *disjunct* instead of *distinct*. In the *Bondman* of Massinger we have a passage evidently copied from this speech of Othello:—

'————— *Let me wear*

Your colours, lady, and though youthful heats

That look no further than your outward form

Are long since buried in me, while I live,

I am a constant lover of you mind,' &c.

Mr. Gifford observes that, 'as this shows how Shakspeare's contemporaries understood the lines, it should, I think, with us be decisive of their meaning.'—The admirers of Shakspeare cannot but recollect with dismay the prodigious mass of conjectural criticism accumulated on this simple passage, as well as the melancholy presage with which it terminates; that after all 'it will probably prove a lasting source of doubt and controversy.' I confess I see little or rather no occasion for either: nor can I possibly conceive why, after the rational and unforced explanation of Johnson, the worthless reveries of Theobald, Tollet, &c. were admitted.—*Affects* occur incessantly in the sense of passions, affections: *young affects* are therefore per-

But to be free and bounteous to her mind :
 And heaven defend your good souls, that you think
 I will your serious and great business scant,
 For⁴³ she is with me : No, when light-wing'd toys
 Of feather'd Cupid seel with wanton dulness
 My speculative and active instruments⁴⁴,
 That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
 Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,
 And all indign and base adversities
 Make head against my estimation⁴⁵ !

Duke. Be it as you shall privately determine
 Either for her stay, or going : the affair cries—haste,
 And speed must answer it ; you must hence to-night.

Des. To-night, my lord ?

Duke. This night.

fectly synonymous with *youthful heats*. Othello, like Timon, was not an old man, though he had lost the fire of youth ; the critics might therefore have dismissed their concern for the lady, which they have so delicately communicated for the edification of the rising generation. Mr. Gifford suggests that Shakspeare may have given *affect* in the singular to correspond with *heat*. *Affect* is also used for *passion*, in an Elegy on the Death of Sir Thomas Wyatt, by Lord Surrey :—

‘ An eye whose judgement none *affect* could blinde,
 Friendes to allure, and foes to reconcile.’

Dr. Johnson's explanation is :—‘ I ask it not (says Othello) to *please appetite, or satisfy loose desires*, the passions of youth which I have now outlived, or for any particular gratification of myself, but merely that I may indulge the wishes of my wife.’ Upton had previously changed *my*, the reading of the old copy, to *me* ; but he has printed *effects*, not seeming to know that *affects* could be a noun.

⁴³ i. e. *cause*.

⁴⁴ Thus the folio ; except that, instead of *active instruments*, it has *offic'd instrument*. The quarto reads ‘ *And feather'd Cupid foils,*’ &c. *Speculative instruments*, in Shakspeare's language, are the *eyes* ; and *active instruments*, the *hands and feet*. To *seel* is to *close up*. The meaning of the passage appears to be, ‘ When the pleasures and idle toys of love make me unfit either for seeing the duties of my office, or for the ready performance of them.’

⁴⁵ The quarto reads *reputation*.

Oth. With all my heart.

Duke. At nine i' the morning here we'll meet again.
Othello, leave some officer behind,
And he shall our commission bring to you:
With such things else of quality and respect,
As doth import you.

Oth. Please your grace, my ancient;
A man he is of honesty and trust:
To his conveyance I assign my wife,
With what else needful your good grace shall think
To be sent after me.

Duke. Let it be so.—
Good night to every one.—And, noble signior,
[To BRABANTIO.

If virtue no delighted⁴⁶ beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

1 *Sen.* Adieu, brave Moor! use Desdemona well.

Bra. Look to her, Moor; have a quick eye to see;
She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee.

[*Exeunt* Duke, Senators, Officers, &c.

Oth. My life upon her faith.—Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee;
I pr'ythee, let thy wife attend on her;
And bring them after in the best advantage⁴⁷.—
Come, Desdemona; I have but an hour
Of love, of worldly matters and direction,
To spend with thee: we must obey the time.

[*Exeunt* OTHELLO and DESDEMONA.

Rod. Iago.

Iago. What say'st thou, noble heart?

Rod. What will I do, thinkest thou?

Iago. Why, go to bed, and sleep.

Rod. I will incontinently drown myself.

Iago. Well, if thou dost, I shall never love thee
after it. Why, thou silly gentleman!

⁴⁶ *Delighted for delighting.* See vol. i. p. 54, note 22.

⁴⁷ *i. e. fairest opportunity.*

Rod. It is silliness to live, when to live is a torment: and then have we a prescription to die, when death is our physician.

Iago. O villanous! I have looked upon the world for four times seven years⁴⁸! and since I could distinguish between a benefit and an injury, I never found a man that knew how to love himself. Ere I would say, I would drown myself for the love of a Guinea-hen⁴⁹, I would change my humanity with a baboon.

Rod. What should I do? I confess, it is my shame to be so fond; but it is not in virtue to amend it.

Iago. Virtue? a fig! 'tis in ourselves, that we are thus, or thus. Our bodies are our gardens; to the which, our wills are gardeners: so that if we will plant nettles, or sow lettuce; set hyssop, and weed up thyme; supply it with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many; either to have it steril with idleness, or manured with industry: why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills. If the balance⁵⁰ of our lives had not one scale of reason to poise another of sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions: But we have reason to cool our raging motions, our carnal stings,

⁴⁸ That Iago means to say he was but twenty-eight years old, is clearly ascertained by his marking particularly, though indefinitely, a period *within that time* ['and since I could distinguish,' &c.] when he began to make observations on the characters of men. Waller, on a picture which was painted for him in his youth by Cornelius Jansen, and which is now in the possession of his heir, has expressed the same thought: 'Anno ætatis 23; vitæ vix primo.—In the novel, on which Othello is founded, Iago is described as a young handsome man.

⁴⁹ A Guinea-hen was a cant term for a woman of easy virtue.

⁵⁰ The folio reads 'if the brain;' probably a mistake for beam.

our unbitted⁵¹ lusts; whereof I take this, that you call—love, to be a sect⁵², or scion.

Rod. It cannot be.

Iago. It is merely a lust of the blood, and a permission of the will. Come, be a man: Drown thyself? drown cats, and blind puppies. I have professed me thy friend, and I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables of perdurable toughness; I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse; follow these wars; defeat thy favour with an usurped beard⁵³; I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be, that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor,—put money in thy purse;—nor he his to her: it was a violent commencement, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration⁵⁴;—put but money in thy purse.—These Moors are changeable in their wills:—fill thy purse with money: the food that to him now is as luscious as locusts, shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida⁵⁵. She must change for

⁵¹ So in *A Knack to Know an Honest Man*, 1596:—

‘—— Virtue never taught thee that,
She sets a *bit* upon her *bridled lusts*.’

See also *As You Like It*, Act ii. Sc. 4:—

‘For thou thyself hast been a libertine,
As sensual as the *brutish sting* itself.’

⁵² A *sect* is what the gardeners call a *cutting*.

⁵³ I have already observed that *defeat* was used for *disfigurement* or *alteration* of features: from the French *défaire*. See vol. iv. p. 144, note 12. *Favour* means that combination of features which gives the face its distinguishing character.

⁵⁴ *Sequestration* is defined to be ‘a putting apart, a separation of a thing from the possession of both those that contend for it.’ It is not therefore necessary to suppose any change requisite in the text. In another passage of this play we have ‘a *sequester* from liberty.’ So in *Romeo and Juliet*:—

‘These *violent delights* have *violent ends*,
And in their triumph die.’

⁵⁵ The quarto reads ‘as *acerb* as coloquintida.’ The poet had the third chapter of St. Matthew’s Gospel in his thoughts.

youth; when she is sated with his body, she will find the error of her choice.—She must have change, she must; therefore put money in thy purse.—If thou wilt needs damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than drowning. Make all the money thou canst: If sanctimony and a frail vow, betwixt an erring⁵⁶ barbarian and a supersubtle Venetian, be not too hard for my wits, and all the tribe of hell, thou shalt enjoy her; therefore make money. A pox of drowning thyself! it is clean out of the way: seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing thy joy, than to be drowned and go without her.

Rod. Wilt thou be fast to my hopes, if I depend on the issue?

Iago. Thou art sure of me;—Go, make money:—I have told thee often, and I retell thee again and again, I hate the Moor: My cause is hearted⁵⁷: thine hath no less reason: Let us be conjunctive in

in which we are told that John the Baptist lived in the wilderness on *locusts* and wild *honey*. Mr. Douce observes, that 'there is another phrase of the same kind, viz. *to exchange herb John for coloquintida*. It is used in Osborne's *Memoirs of James I.* and elsewhere. The pedantic Tomlinson, in his translation of Renodæus's *Dispensatory*, says, that many superstitious persons call mugwort St. John's herb, wherewith he circumcined his loins on holidays. Shakspeare, who was extremely well acquainted with popular superstitions, might have recollected this circumstance, when, for reasons best known to himself, he chose to vary the phrase by substituting the *luscious locusts* of the Baptist. Whether these were the fruit of the tree so called, or the well known insect, is not likely to be determined. It is said that the insect *locusts* are considered a delicacy at Tonquin. Bullein says that '*coloquintida* is most bitter.'—*Bulwarke of Defence*, 1579.

⁵⁶ *Erring* is the same as *erraticus* in Latin. So in *Hamlet*:
'Th' extravagant and *erring* spirit.'

And in *As You Like It*:—

'—— how brief the life of man
Runs his *erring* pilgrimage.'

⁵⁷ This adjective occurs again in Act iii.:—'*hearted throne*.'

our revenge against him: if thou canst cuckold him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, and me a sport. There are many events in the womb of time, which will be delivered. Traverse⁵⁸; go: provide thy money. We will have more of this to-morrow.—
Adieu.

Rod. Where shall we meet i'the morning?

Iago. At my lodging.

Rod. I'll be with thee betimes.

Iago. Go to; farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo?

Rod. What say you?

Iago. No more of drowning, do you hear.

Rod. I am changed. I'll sell all my land.

Iago. Go to; farewell: put money enough in your purse.

[*Exit RODERIGO.*]

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse:

For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,

If I would time expend with such a snipe⁵⁹,

But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor;

And it is thought abroad, that 'twixt my sheets

He has done my office: I know not if it be true;

But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,

Will do, as if for surety⁶⁰. He holds me well;

The better shall my purpose work on him.

Cassio's a proper man: Let me see now;

To get his place, and to plume⁶¹ up my will;

A double knavery,—How? how?—Let me see:—

After some time, to abuse Othello's ear,

That he is too familiar with his wife:—

He hath a person; and a smooth dispose

⁵⁸ i. e. *march*. See vol. v. p. 325, note 15.

⁵⁹ *Woodcock* was the general term for a foolish fellow. Iago is more sarcastic, and compares his dupe to a smaller and meaner bird of almost the same shape.

⁶⁰ That is, I will act as if I were certain of the fact. 'He holds me well,' is, he entertains a good opinion of me.

⁶¹ The first quarto reads 'to make up.'

To be suspected; fram'd to make women false,
 The Moor is of a free and open nature,
 That thinks men honest, that but seem to be so;
 And will as tenderly be led by the nose,
 As asses are.
 I have't;—it is engender'd:—Hell and night
 Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.
 [Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Seaport Town in Cyprus*¹. *A Platform.*

Enter MONTANO and Two Gentlemen.

Mon. What from the cape can you discern at sea?

1 Gent. Nothing at all: it is a high-wrought flood;
 I cannot, 'twixt the heaven² and the main,
 Descry a sail.

¹ All the modern editors following Rowe have supposed the capital of Cyprus to be the place where the scene of Othello lies during four Acts: but this could not have been Shakspeare's intention; *Nicosia*, the capital city of Cyprus, being situated nearly in the centre of the island, and thirty miles distant from the sea. The principal seaport town of Cyprus is *Famagusta*; where there was formerly a strong fort and commodious haven, 'neare which (says Knolles) standeth an old *castle*, with four towers after the ancient manner of building.' To this castle we find that Othello presently repairs. Cenchis, in the novel, makes no mention of any attack on Cyprus by the Turks; but they took the island from the Venetians in 1570. By mentioning Rhodes as likely to be attacked by the Turks, the historical fact is disregarded; for they were in quiet possession of that island, and had been masters of it since the year 1522; and from 1473, when the Venetians first became possessed of Cyprus, to 1522, they had not been molested by any Turkish armament.

² The quarto reads:—

' ————— 'twixt the haven and the main;'
 and Malone adopts that reading. Perhaps the poet wrote 'the

Mon. Methinks, the wind hath spoke aloud at land:
 A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements:
 If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,
 What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them³,
 Can hold the mortise? what shall we hear of this?

2 Gent. A segregation of the Turkish fleet:
 For do but stand upon the foaming shore⁴,
 The chiding billow seems to pelt the clouds;
 The wind-shak'd surge, with high and monstrous
 main,
 Seems to cast water on the burning bear⁵,
 And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole:
 I never did like molestation view
 On the' enchain'd flood.

Mon. If that the Turkish fleet
 Be not ensheker'd and embay'd, they are drown'd;
 It is impossible they bear it out.

Enter a third Gentleman.

3 Gent. News, lords! our wars are done:
 The desperate tempest hath so bang'd the Turks,

heavens.' A subsequent passage may serve to show that the folio affords the true reading:—

' ————— Let's to the seaside, ho!
 As well to see the vessel that's come in,
 As throw our eyes out for brave Othello:
 Even till we make *the main and the ethereal blue*
 An indistinct regard.'

³ The quarto of 1622 reads 'when *the huge mountaine meslt*, the letter *s*, which perhaps belongs to *mountaine*, having wandered at press from its place. In a subsequent scene we have:

' And let the labouring bark climb *hills of seas*
Olympus high'——

And in *Troilus and Cressida*:—

' The strong ribb'd bark through *liquid mountains* cuts.'

⁴ The elder quarto reads 'the *banning* shore.'

⁵ The constellation near the polar star. The next line alludes to the star *Arctophylax*, which literally signifies the guard of the bear. The 4to. 1622 reads 'ever-fired pole.'

That their designment halts : A noble ship of Venice
Hath seen a grievous wreck and sufferance
On most part of their fleet.

Mon. How ! is this true ?

3 Gent. The ship is here put in,
A Veronesé⁶ ; Michael Cassio,
Lieutenant to the warlike Moor, Othello,
Is come on shore : the Moor himself's at sea,
And is in full commission here for Cyprus.

Mon. I am glad on't ; 'tis a worthy governor.

3 Gent. But this same Cassio,—though he speak
of comfort,
Touching the Turkish loss,—yet he looks sadly,
And prays the Moor be safe ; for they were parted
With foul and violent tempest.

Mon. 'Pray heaven, he be ;
For I have serv'd him, and the man commands
Like a full⁷ soldier. Let's to the seaside, ho !
As well to see the vessel that's come in,
As throw out our eyes for brave Othello ;
Even till we make the main, and the aerial blue,
An indistinct regard.

3 Gent. Come, let's do so ;
For every minute is expectancy
Of more arrivance.

Enter CASSIO.

Cas. Thanks to the valiant of this warlike isle,
That so approve the Moor ; O, let the heavens

⁶ The old copy reads ' a *Veronessa* ;' whether this signified a ship fitted out by the people of Verona, who were tributary to the Venetian republic, or designated some particular kind of vessel, is not yet fully established. But as *Veronessa* has not hitherto been met with elsewhere, the former is most probably the true explanation.

⁷ a full soldier is a complete one. See Act i. Sc. 1, note 13.

Give him defence against the elements,
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea!

Mon. Is he well shipp'd?

Cas. His bark is stoutly timber'd, and his pilot
Of very expert and approv'd allowance⁸;
Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure⁹.

[*Within.*]

A sail, a sail, a sail!

Enter another Gentleman.

Cas. What noise?

4 Gent. The town is empty; on the brow o'the sea
Stand ranks of people, and they cry—a sail.

Cas. My hopes do shape him for the governor.

2 Gent. They do discharge their shot of courtesy;
[*Guns heard.*

Our friends, at least.

Cas. I pray you, sir, go forth,
And give us truth who 'tis that is arriv'd.

2 Gent. I shall. [*Exit.*

Mon. But, good lieutenant, is your general wiv'd?

Cas. Most fortunately: he hath achiev'd a maid
That paragon's description, and wild fame;
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens¹⁰,

⁸ i. e. of allowed and approved expertness.

⁹ The meaning seems to be, 'Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death, by excess of apprehension, stand in confidence of being cured.' A parallel expression occurs in *Lear*:—

'This rest might yet have balm'd his broken senses,
Which if conveniency will not allow
Stand in hard cure.'

Again:—

'—— his life with thine
Stand in assured loss.'

Solomon has said 'Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.'

¹⁰ Thus in *Shakspeare's* 103rd Sonnet:—

'—— a face
That over-goes my blunt invention quite,
Dulling my lines, and doing me disgrace.'

And in the essential vesture of creation,
Does bear all excellency¹¹.—How now? who has
put in?

Re-enter second Gentleman.

2 *Gent.* 'Tis one Iago, ancient to the general.

Cas. He has had most favourable and happy speed:
Tempests themselves, high seas, and howling winds,
The gutter'd rocks, and congregated sands,—
Traitors ensteep'd¹² to clog the guiltless keel,
As having sense of beauty, do omit
Their mortal¹³ natures, letting go safely by
The divine Desdemona.

Mon.

What is she?

Cas. She that I spake of, our great captain's
captain,
Left in the conduct of the bold Iago;
Whose footing here anticipates our thoughts,
A se'nnight's speed.—Great Jove, Othello guard,
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath;

¹¹ This is the reading of the quartos: the folio has:—

'And in the *essential vesture of creation*

Do's tyre the Ingeniuer.'

By the *essential vesture of creation* the poet means her *outward form*, which he in another place calls 'the muddy *vesture* of decay.' If the reading of the folio be adopted, the meaning would be this: She is one who excels all description, and in real beauty, or outward form, goes beyond the power of the inventive pencil of the artist.—Fleckno, in his discourse on the English Stage, 1664, speaking of painting, mentions 'the stupendous works of your great *ingeniers*.' And Ben Jonson, in his *Sejanus*, Act iv. Sc. 4:—

'No, Silius, we are no good *ingeniers*,

We want the fine arts.'

An *ingenier* or *ingeniuer* undoubtedly means an *artist* or *painter*; and is perhaps only another form of *engineer*, anciently used for any kind of artist or artificer.

¹² 'Traitors *ensteeped*' are merely traitors concealed under the water.

¹³ *Mortal* is deadly, destructive.

That he may bless this bay with his tall ship,
 Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,
 Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,
 And bring all Cyprus comfort!—O, behold,

*Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, IAGO, RODERIGO,
 and Attendants.*

The riches of the ship is come on shore¹⁴!
 Ye men of Cyprus, let her have your knees:—
 Hail to thee, lady! and the grace of heaven,
 Before, behind thee, and on every hand,
 Enwheel thee round!

Des. I thank you, valiant Cassio.
 What tidings can you tell me of my lord?

Cas. He is not yet arriv'd; nor know I aught
 But that he's well, and will be shortly here.

Des. O, but I fear;—How lost you company?

Cas. The great contention of the sea and skies
 Parted our fellowship: But, hark! a sail.

[*Cry within, A sail, a sail! Then guns heard.*

2 Gent. They give their greeting to the citadel;
 This likewise is a friend.

Cas. See for the news¹⁵.—

[*Exit Gentleman.*

Good ancient, you are welcome;—Welcome, mis-
 tress:—

[*To EMILIA.*

Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,
 That I extend my manners; 'tis my breeding
 That gives me this bold show of courtesy.

[*Kissing her.*

Iago. Sir, would she give you so much of her lips
 As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,
 You'd have enough.

¹⁴ 'The riches of the ship is come on shore.' Shakspeare uses *riches* as a singular in his eighty-seventh Sonnet:—

'And for that riches, where is my deserving?'

¹⁵ The first quarto reads 'So speaks this voice.'

Des. Alas, she has no speech.

Iago. In faith too much;
I find it still, when I have list to sleep:
Marry, before your ladyship, I grant,
She puts her tongue a little in her heart,
And chides with thinking.

Emil. You have little cause to say so.

Iago. Come on, come on; you are pictures out
of doors,
Bells in your parlours, wild cats in your kitchens,
Saints in your injuries¹⁶, devils being offended,
Players in your housewifery, and housewives in
your beds.

Des. O, fye upon thee, slanderer!

Iago. Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk;
You rise to play, and go to bed to work.

Emil. You shall not write my praise.

Iago. No, let me not.

Des. What would'st thou write of me, if thou
should'st praise me?

Iago. O gentle lady, do not put me to't;
For I am nothing, if not critical¹⁷.

Des. Come on, assay:—There's one gone to the
harbour?

Iago. Ay, madam.

Des. I am not merry; but I do beguile
The thing I am, by seeming otherwise.—
Come, how would'st thou praise me?

Iago. I am about it; but, indeed, my invention

¹⁶ That is When you have a mind to do injuries, you put on an air of sanctity. In Puttenham's Art of Poesie, 1589, we have almost the same thoughts:—'We limit the comely parts of a woman to consist in four points; that is, to be a shrew in the kitchen, a saint in the church, an angel at board, and an ape in the bed; as the chronicle reports by mistress Shore, paramour to King Edward the Fourth.' There is something similar in Middleton's Blurt Master Constable, 1602; and it is alluded to in The Miseries of Inforc'd Marriage, 1607.

¹⁷ i. e. censorious.

Comes from my pate, as birdlime does from frize¹⁸,
It plucks out brains and all: But my muse labours,
And thus she is deliver'd.

If she be fair and wise,—fairness, and wit,
The one's for use, the other useth it.

Des. Wellprais'd! How if she be black and witty?

Iago. If she be black, and thereto have a wit,
She'll find a white that shall her blackness fit¹⁹.

Des. Worse and worse.

Emil. How, if fair and foolish?

Iago. She never yet was foolish that was fair;
For even her folly help'd her to an heir.

Des. These are old fond paradoxes, to make fools
laugh i'the alehouse. What miserable praise hast
thou for her that's foul and foolish?

Iago. There's none so foul, and foolish thereunto,
But does foul pranks which fair and wise ones do.

Des. O heavy ignorance!—thou praisest the worst
best. But what praise could'st thou bestow on a
deserving woman indeed²⁰! one, that, in the autho-
rity of her merit, did justly put on the vouch of
very malice itself²¹?

Iago. She that was ever fair, and never proud;
Had tongue at will, and yet was never loud;
Never lack'd gold, and yet went never gay;
Fled from her wish, and yet said,—*now I may*;

¹⁸ A similar thought occurs in *The Puritan*:—'The excuse
stuck upon my tongue like ship-pitch upon a mariner's gown.'

¹⁹ The quarto reads—*hit*.

²⁰ The hint for this question and the metrical reply of Iago is
taken from a strange pamphlet called *Choice, Chance, and
Change, or Conceits in their Colours*, 1606.

²¹ The sense is this—one that was so conscious of her own
merit, and of the authority her character had with every one,
that she durst call upon malice itself to vouch for her. This was
some commendation. And the character only of clearest virtue;
which could force malice, even against its nature, to do justice.
—*Warburton*. To *put on* is to provoke, to incite.

She that, being anger'd, her revenge being nigh,
 Bade her wrong stay, and her displeasure fly:
 She, that in wisdom never was so frail,
 To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail²²;
 She that could think, and ne'er disclose her mind,
 See suitors following, and not look behind;
 She was a wight,—if ever such wight were,—

Des. To do what?

Iago. To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer²³.

Des. O most lame and impotent conclusion!—
 Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy
 husband.—How say you, Cassio? is he not a most
 profane²⁴ and liberal counsellor?

Cas. He speaks home, madam; you may relish
 him more in the soldier, than in the scholar.

Iago. [*Aside.*] He takes her by the palm: Ay,
 well said, whisper: with as little a web as this, will
 I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon
 her, do; I will gyve²⁵ thee in thine own courtship.
 You say true; 'tis so indeed: if such tricks as these
 strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better
 you had not kissed your three fingers so oft, which
 now again you are most apt to play the sir in.

²² That is to exchange a delicacy for coarser fare. See Queen Elizabeth's Household Book for the forty-third year of her reign:—'Item, the master cookes have to fee all the *salmons' tails,*' &c. p. 296.

²³ i. e. 'to suckle children and keep the accounts of the household.' These expressions are only instances of the want of natural affection, and the predominance of a critical censoriousness in Iago, which he allows himself to be possessed of, where he says 'O! I am nothing if not critical.'

²⁴ See Act i. Sc. 1, note 20. *Liberal* is *licentious*.

²⁵ To *gyve* is to *fetter*, to *shackle*. The first quarto reads—I will *catch* you in your own *courtsies*. It may be as well to observe that *courtship* is the same as *courtesy*, i. e. complimentary or courtly behaviour. To *play the sir* is to show good breeding and gallantry.

Very good; well kissed! an excellent courtesy!
'tis so, indeed. Yet again your fingers to your
lips? 'would, they were clyster-pipes for your sake!
——[*Trumpet.*] The Moor, I know his trumpet.

Cas. 'Tis truly so.

Des. Let's meet him, and receive him.

Cas. Lo, where he comes!

Enter OTHELLO, and Attendants.

Oth. O my fair warrior²⁶!

Des. My dear Othello!

Oth. It gives me wonder great as my content,
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy!
If after every tempest come such calms,
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas,
Olympus-high; and duck again as low
As hell's from heaven! If it were now to die,
'Twere now to be most happy²⁷; for, I fear,
My soul hath her content so absolute,

²⁶ This phrase was introduced by our copiers of the French sonnetteers. Ronsard frequently calls his mistresses *guerrieres*; and Southern, his imitator, is not less prodigal of the same appellation. Thus in his fifth sonnet:—

'And my fair warrior, my light shines in thy fair eyes.'

And in his sixth sonnet he uses it twice:—

'I am not, my cruel warrior, the Thebain,' &c.

'I came not, my warrior, of the blood Lidain.'

Had not I met with the word thus fantastically applied, I should have concluded that Othello called his wife a warrior because she embarked with him on a warlike expedition, and not in consequence of Ovid's observation:—

'*Militat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido.*'

Desdemona in Act iii. says:—'Unhandsome warrior as I am.'—
Steevens.

²⁷ So Cherea in The Eunuch of Terence, Act iii. Sc. 5:—

'——— Proh Jupiter!

Nunc tempus profecto est, cum perpeti me possum interfici,
Ne vita aliquâ hoc gaudium contaminet ægritudine.'

That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.

Des. The heavens forbid,
But that our loves and comforts should increase,
Even as our days do grow !

Oth. Amen to that, sweet powers!—
I cannot speak enough of this content,
It stops me here ; it is too much of joy :
And this, and this, the greatest discords be ²⁸,
[*Kissing her.*

That e'er our hearts shall make !

Iago. O, you are well tun'd now!
But I'll set down the pegs that make this musick,
As honest as I am. [Aside.

Oth. Come, let's to the castle.—
News, friends ; our wars are done, the Turks are
drown'd.

How do our old acquaintance of this isle?—
Honey, you shall be well desir'd ²⁹ in Cyprus,
I have found great love amongst them. O my sweet,
I prattle out of fashion ³⁰, and I dote
In mine own comforts.—I pr'ythee, good Iago,
Go to the bay, and disembark my coffers :
Bring thou the master ³¹ to the citadel ;

²⁸ Thus in Marlowe's *Lust's Dominion*:—

' I pri'thee chide, if I have done amiss,

But let my punishment be *this and this*. [*Kissing the Moor.*
Marlowe's play was written before that of Shakspeare, who
might possibly have acted in it.

²⁹ i. e. much solicited by invitation. So in *The Letters of the
Paston Family*, vol. i. p. 299:—' At the which weddyng I was
with myn hostes, and also *desyryd* by y^e jentylman hymselfe.'

³⁰ Out of method, without any settled order of discourse.

³¹ The *master* is a distinct person from the pilot of a vessel,
and has the principal care and command of the vessel under the
captain, where there is a captain ; and in chief where there is
none. Dr. Johnson confounded the *master* with the *pilot*, and
the poet himself seems to have done so. See the first line of
Scene 2, Act iii.

He is a good one, and his worthiness
Does challenge much respect.—Come, Desdemona,
Once more well met at Cyprus.

[*Exeunt* OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, and
Attendants.

Iago. Do thou meet me presently at the harbour.
Come hither. If thou be'st valiant as (they say)
base men, being in love, have then a nobility in
their natures more than is native to them,—list me.
The lieutenant to-night watches on the court of
guard³²:—First, I must tell thee this—Desdemona
is directly in love with him.

Rod. With him! why, 'tis not possible.

Iago. Lay thy finger—thus³³, and let thy soul be
instructed. Mark me with what violence she first
loved the Moor, but for bragging, and telling her
fantastical lies: And will she love him still for
prating? let not thy discreet heart think it. Her
eye must be fed; and what delight shall she have
to look on the devil? When the blood is made dull
with the act of sport, there should be,—again to
inflamm it, and to give satiety a fresh appetite,—
loveliness in favour; sympathy in years, manners,
and beauties; all which the Moor is defective in:
Now, for want of these required conveniences, her
delicate tenderness will find itself abused, begin to
heave the gorge, disrelish and abhor the Moor;
very nature will instruct her in it, and compel her
to some second choice. Now, sir, this granted (as
it is a most pregnant and unforced position), who
stands so eminently in the degree of this fortune, as
Cassio does? a knave very voluble, no further con-
scionable, than in putting on the mere form of civil

³² That is the place where the guard musters.

³³ On thy mouth to stop it, while thou art listening to a wise
man.

and humane seeming, for the better compassing of his salt and most hidden loose affection? why, none; why, none: A slippery and subtle knave; a finder out of occasions; that has an eye can stamp and counterfeit advantages, though true advantage never present itself: A devilish knave! besides, the knave is handsome, young; and hath all those requisites in him, that folly and green minds³⁴ look after: A pestilent complete knave; and the woman hath found him already.

Rod. I cannot believe that in her; she is full of most blessed condition³⁵.

Iago. Blessed fig's end! the wine she drinks is made of grapes: if she had been blessed, she would never have loved the Moor; Blessed pudding! Didst thou not see her paddle with the palm of his hand? didst not mark that?

Rod. Yes, that I did; but that was but courtesy.

Iago. Lechery, by his hand; an index³⁶, and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts. They met so near with their lips, that their breaths embraced together. Villanous thoughts, Roderigo! when these mutualities so marshal the way, hard at hand comes the master and main exercise, the incorporate conclusion: Pish!—But, sir, be you ruled by me: I have brought you from Venice. Watch you to-night; for the command, I'll lay't upon you: Cassio knows you not;—I'll not be far from you: Do you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting³⁷ his discipline; or from what other course

³⁴ Minds unripe, minds not yet fully formed.

³⁵ Qualities, disposition of mind.

³⁶ It has already been observed that *indexes* were formerly prefixed to books. See vol. vii. p. 348.

³⁷ Throwing a slur upon his discipline. So in *Troilus and Cressida*, Act i. Sc. 3:—

'In taint of our best man.'

you please, which the time shall more favourably minister.

Rod. Well.

Iago. Sir, he is rash, and very sudden³⁸ in choler; and, haply, with his truncheon may strike at you: Provoke him, that he may: for, even out of that, will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny; whose qualification³⁹ shall come into no true taste again, but by the displanting of Cassio. So shall you have a shorter journey to your desires, by the means I shall then have to prefer⁴⁰ them; and the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

Rod. I will do this, if I can bring it to any opportunity.

Iago. I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel: I must fetch his necessaries ashore. Farewell.

Rod. Adieu.

[*Exit.*

Iago. That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it; That she loves him, 'tis apt, and of great credit: The Moor—howbeit that I endure him not,— Is of a constant, loving, noble nature; And, I dare think, he'll prove to Desdemona A most dear husband. Now I do love her too; Not out of absolute lust (though, peradventure, I stand accountant for as great a sin), But partly led to diet my revenge, For that I do suspect the lusty Moor

³⁸ *Sudden* is precipitately violent. So Malcolm, describing Macbeth:—

‘ I grant him bloody—
Sudden, malicious.’

³⁹ Johnson has erroneously explained this. *Qualification*, in our old writers, signifies *appeasement, pacification, asswagement of anger*. ‘ To appease and *qualifie* one that is angry; tranquillo facere ex irato.’—*Baret*.

⁴⁰ To advance them.

Hath leap'd into my seat: the thought whereof
 Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards;
 And nothing can or shall content my soul,
 Till I am even⁴¹ with him, wife for wife;
 Or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor
 At least into a jealousy so strong
 That judgment cannot cure. Which thing to do,—
 If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trace⁴²
 For his quick hunting, stand the putting on,
 I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip;
 Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb⁴³,

⁴¹ Thus the quarto 1622. The folio—till I am *even'd* with him: i. e. till I am on a level with him by retaliation.

⁴² 'If this poor trash of Venice, whom I *trace*
 For his quick hunting, bear the putting on,' &c.
 This is the reading of the folio, which, though it has a plain and easy sense, would not do for the commentators, and the quarto of 1622 reading *crush*, they altered it to *trash*, signifying to *impede*, to *keep back* (see vol. i. p. 15, note 9), a meaning the very converse of that required by the context; to say nothing of the wretched jingle of *trash* and *trash*; which Steevens is pleased to consider 'much in Shakspeare's manner'! The fact is, to *trace* means neither more nor less than to *follow*, the appropriate hunting term; the old French *tracer*, *tracher*, *trasser*, and the Italian *tracciare* having the same meaning. Steevens is sadly put to it to explain how *keeping Roderigo back* and *putting him on* can quadrate, and all is doubt and perplexity. Bishop Hall, in the third satire of his fifth book, uses *trace* for to *follow*:—

'Go on and thrive, my petty tyrant's pride,
 Scorn thou to live, if others live beside;
 And *trace* proud Castile, that aspires to be
 In his old age a young fifth monarchy.'

So Cavendish, in his Metrical Visions, p. 114:—

'——— Fortune hath me forsake,
 Whom she heretofore highly did advance,
 And *traced* me forth in the pleasant dance
 Of worldly honours and highe dignytie.'

The phrase to *have on the hip*, which is also from the chase, is explained in vol. iii. p. 17, note 2. We should perhaps read:—

'If this poor *brach* [i. e. hound] of Venice,' &c.

⁴³ 'In the *rank garb*,' which has puzzled Steevens and Malone, is merely 'in the *right down*, or *straight forward fashion*.' In *As You Like It* we have 'the right butterwoman's *rank* to

For I fear Cassio with my nightcap too;
 Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me,
 For making him egregiously an ass,
 And practising upon his peace and quiet
 Even to madness. 'Tis here, but yet confus'd;
 Knavery's plain face is never seen, till us'd⁴⁴.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II. A Street.

Enter a Herald, with a Proclamation; People following.

Her. It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant general, that, upon certain tidings now arrived, importing the mere¹ perdition of the Turkish fleet, every man put himself into triumph; some to dance, some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and revels his addiction leads him; for, besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptials: So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All offices² are open; and there is full liberty of feasting, from this present hour of five, till the bell hath told eleven. Heaven bless the isle of Cyprus, and our noble general Othello!

[*Exeunt.*

market.' And in King Lear, Cornwall says of Kent in disguise, that he 'doth affect a saucy roughness, and constrains the *garb* (i. e. assumes the *fashion*) quite from his nature.' Gower says of Fluellen, in King Henry V.:—'You thought, because he could not speak English in the native *garb*, he could not therefore handle an English cudgel.' The folio reads—'in the *right garb*.'

⁴⁴ 'An honest man acts upon a plan, and forecasts his designs; but a knave depends upon temporary and local opportunities, and never knows his own purpose, but at the time of execution.'—*Johnson.*

¹ *Mere* is *entire*.

² All rooms, or places in the castle, at which refreshments are prepared or served out. See vol. viii. p. 40, note 14.

SCENE III. *A Hall in the Castle.*

Enter OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and Attendants.

Oth. Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night :

Let's teach ourselves that honourable stop,
Not to outsport discretion.

Cas. Iago hath direction what to do ;
But, notwithstanding, with my personal eye
Will I look to't.

Oth. Iago is most honest.

Michael, good night : To-morrow, with our earliest,
Let me have speech with you.—Come, my dear love,
The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue ;

[*To* DESDEMONA.

That profit's yet to come 'twixt me and you.—
Good night. [*Exeunt* OTH. DES. and Attend.

Enter IAGO.

Cas. Welcome, Iago : We must to the watch.

Iago. Not this hour, lieutenant ; 'tis not yet ten o'clock : Our general cast¹ us thus early, for the love of his Desdemona ; whom let us not therefore blame ; he hath not yet made wanton the night with her : and she is sport for Jove.

Cas. She's a most exquisite lady.

Iago. And, I'll warrant her, full of game.

Cas. Indeed, she is a most fresh and delicate creature.

¹ i. e. dismissed us, threw us off, or rid himself of our company. The Herald has just informed us that there was full liberty of feasting, &c. till *eleven*. So in *The Witch*, by Middleton :—

' *She cast off*

My company betimes to-night, by tricks, &c.

Iago. What an eye she has! methinks it sounds a parley of provocation.

Cas. An inviting eye; and yet methinks right modest.

Iago. And, when she speaks, is it not an alarm to love?

Cas. She is, indeed, perfection².

Iago. Well, happiness to their sheets! Come, lieutenant, I have a stoop of wine; and here without are a brace of Cyprus gallants, that would fain have a measure to the health of the black Othello.

Cas. Not to-night, good Iago; I have very poor and unhappy brains for drinking; I could well wish courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment.

Iago. O, they are our friends; but one cup; I'll drink for you.

Cas. I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that was craftily qualified³ too, and, behold, what innovation it makes here: I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

Iago. What, man! 'tis a night of revels; the gallants desire it.

Cas. Where are they?

Iago. Here at the door; I pray you, call them in.

Cas. I'll do't; but it dislikes me. [*Exit CASSIO.*]

Iago. If I can fasten but one cup upon him,
With that which he hath drunk to-night already,
He'll be as full of quarrel and offence
As my young mistress' dog. Now, my sick fool,
Roderigo,

² In this and the seven short speeches preceding, the decent character of Cassio is most powerfully contrasted with that of the licentious Iago.

³ Silly mixed with water.

Whom love has turn'd almost the wrong side outward,

To Desdemona hath to-night carous'd
 Potations pottle deep; and he's to watch:
 Three lads of Cyprus,—noble swelling spirits,
 That hold their honours in a wary distance,
 The very elements of this warlike isle⁴,
 Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups,
 And they watch too. Now, 'mongst this flock of
 drunkards,

Am I to put our Cassio in some action
 That may offend the isle:—But here they come:
 If consequence do but approve my dream⁵,
 My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

*Re-enter CASSIO, with him MONTANO, and
 Gentlemen.*

Cas. 'Fore heaven, they have given me a rouse⁶
 already.

Mon. Good faith, a little one; not past a pint, as
 I am a soldier⁷.

Iago. Some wine, ho!

And let me the canakin clink, clink; [Sings.

And let me the canakin clink:

A soldier's a man;

A life's but a span;

Why then, let a soldier drink.

Some wine, boys! [Wine brought in.

⁴ 'As quarrelsome as the discordia semina rerum; as quick in opposition as fire and water.'—Johnson.

⁵ Every scheme subsisting only in the imagination may be termed a *dream*.

⁶ See Hamlet, p. 172 ante, note 21.

⁷ 'If Montano was Othello's predecessor in the government of Cyprus (as we are told in the Personæ Dramatis) he is not very characteristically employed in the present scene, where he is tippling with people already flustered, and encouraging a subaltern officer, who commands a midnight guard, to drink to excess.'—Steevens.

Cas. 'Fore heaven, an excellent song.

Iago. I learned it in England, where (indeed) they are most potent in potting: your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied Hollander,—Drink, ho!—are nothing to your English.

Cas. Is your Englishman so expert in his drinking⁸?

Iago. Why, he drinks you, with facility, your Dane dead drunk; he sweats not to overthrow your Almain; he gives your Hollander a vomit, ere the next pottle can be filled.

Cas. To the health of our general.

Mon. I am for it, lieutenant; and I'll do you justice⁹.

Iago. O sweet England!

*King Stephen was a worthy peer,
His breeches cost him but a crown;
He held them sixpence all too dear,
With that he call'd the tailor—lown.*

⁸ Thus the quarto 1622. The folio has—*exquisite*. This accomplishment is likewise mentioned by Beaumont and Fletcher in *The Captain*:—

'*Lod.* Are the Englishmen
Such stubborn drinkers?

'*Piso.* — not a leak at sea
Can suck more liquor; you shall have their children
Christen'd in mull'd sack, and at five years old
Able to knock a *Dane* down.'

Henry Peacham in his *Compleat Gentleman*, 1622, p. 193, has a section entitled 'Drinking the Plague of our English Gentry,' in which he says:—'Within these fiftie or threescore yeares it was a rare thing with us to see a drunken man, our nation carrying the name of the most sober and temperate of any other in the world. But since we had to doe in the quarrell of the Netherlands, about the time of Sir John Norris his first being there, the custom of drinking and pledging healthes was brought over into England; wherein let the Dutch be their owne judges, if we equall them not; yea I think rather excell them.'

⁹ i. e. drink as much as you do. See *King Henry IV. Part II. Act v. Sc. 2.*

*He was a wight of high renown,
And thou art but of low degree:
'Tis pride that pulls the country down:
Then take thine auld cloak about thee.*

Some wine, ho!

Cas. Why, this is a more exquisite song than the other.

Iago. Will you hear it again?

Cas. No; for I hold him to be unworthy of his place, that does those things.—Well,—Heaven's above all: and there be souls that must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.

Iago. It's true, good lieutenant.

Cas. For mine own part,—no offence to the general, or any man of quality,—I hope to be saved.

Iago. And so do I too, lieutenant.

Cas. Ay, but, by your leave, not before me; the lieutenant is to be saved before the ancient. Let's have no more of this; let's to our affairs.—Forgive us our sins!—Gentlemen, let's look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk; this is my ancient;—this is my right hand, and this is my left hand:—I am not drunk now; I can stand well enough, and speak well enough.

All. Excellent well.

Cas. Why, very well, then; you must not think then that I am drunk. [*Exit.*

Mon. To the platform, masters; come, let's set the watch.

Iago. You see this fellow, that is gone before;—He is a soldier, fit to stand by Cæsar
And give direction: and do but see his vice;
'Tis to his virtue a just equinox,
The one as long as the other: 'tis pity of him.
I fear, the trust Othello puts him in,

On some odd time of his infirmity
Will shake this island.

Mon. But is he often thus ?

Iago. 'Tis evermore the prologue to his sleep :
He'll watch the horologe a double set¹⁰,
If drink rock not his cradle.

Mon. It were well,
The general were put in mind of it.
Perhaps, he sees it not; or his good nature
Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio,
And looks not on his evils; Is not this true?

Enter RODERIGO.

Iago. How now, Roderigo? [*Aside.*
I pray you, after the lieutenant; go.

[*Exit RODERIGO.*

Mon. And 'tis great pity, that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place, as his own second,
With one of an ingraft¹¹ infirmity;
It were an honest action, to say
So to the Moor.

Iago. Not I, for this fair island :
I do love Cassio well; and would do much
To cure him of this evil. But hark! what noise?
[*Cry within—Help! help!*

Re-enter CASSIO, driving in RODERIGO.

Cas. You rogue! you rascal!

Mon. What's the matter, lieutenant?

¹⁰ If he have no drink, he'll keep awake while the clock strikes two rounds, or four and twenty hours. The word *horologe* is familiar to most of our ancient writers: Chaucer often uses it. So in *The Devil's Charter*, 1607:—

' ——— My gracious lord,

By Sesto's *horologe* 'tis struck eleven.'

¹¹ Rooted, settled.

Cas. A knave!—teach me my duty!
I'll beat the knave into a twiggen¹² bottle.

Rod. Beat me!

Cas. Dost thou prate, rogue?

[*Striking RODERIGO.*

Mon.

Nay, good lieutenant;

[*Staying him.*

I pray you, sir, hold your hand.

Cas.

Let me go, sir,

Or I'll knock you o'er the mazzard.

Mon.

Come, come, you're drunk.

Cas. Drunk!

[*They fight.*

Iago. Away, I say! go out, and cry—a mutiny.

[*Aside to ROD. who goes out.*

Nay, good lieutenant,—alas, gentlemen,—

Help, ho!—Lieutenant,—sir,—Montano,—sir;—

Help, masters!—Here's a goodly watch, indeed!

[*Bell rings.*

Who's that that rings the bell?—Diablo, ho!

The town will rise; God's will, lieutenant! hold;

You will be sham'd for ever.

Enter OTHELLO, and Attendants.

Oth.

What is the matter here?

Mon. I bleed still, I am hurt to the death;—he dies¹³.

Oth. Hold, for your lives.

Iago. Hold, hold, lieutenant, sir, Montano,—
gentlemen,—

¹² i. e. a *wickered* bottle, and so the quarto reads.

¹³ The first quarto omits the words—he dies, and has *wounds!* at the commencement of the line. Montano may be supposed to say—he dies, i. e. he shall die, offering to renew the fight upon finding himself severely hurt. Othello, in the very next speech, says:—‘He dies upon his motion.’

Have you forgot all sense of place and duty?
Hold, hold! the general speaks to you; hold, for
shame!

Oth. Why, how now, ho! from whence ariseth
this?

Are we turn'd Turks; and to ourselves do that,
Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?
For christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl:
He that stirs next to carve for his own rage,
Holds his soul light; he dies upon his motion.—
Silence that dreadful bell, it frights the isle
From her propriety.—What is the matter, masters?—
Honest Iago, that look'st dead with grieving,
Speak, who began this? on thy love, I charge thee.

Iago. I do not know;—friends all but now, even
now,

In quarter¹⁴, and in terms like bride and groom
Devesting them for bed: and then, but now,
(As if some planet had unwitted men),
Swords out, and tilting one at other's breast,
In opposition bloody. I cannot speak
Any beginning to this peevish odds;
And 'would, in action glorious I had lost
These legs, that brought me to a part of it!

Oth. How comes it, Michael, you are thus for-
got¹⁵?

Cas. I pray you, pardon me, I cannot speak.

¹⁴ i. e. on our station. 'This short note might have saved the long disquisitions of Ritson, Henley, and Malone, about the precise meaning of a word which, in the military language of the present day at least, seems to have no very precise meaning. The meaning given above seems the leading signification, for the principal camp guard of a regiment is called the *quarter* guard; but a regiment in quarters has no such guard. I wonder that Mr. Steevens, who had been in the militia, did not exercise his judgment on this passage.'—*Pye*.

¹⁵ i. e. you have thus forgot yourself.

Oth. Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil;
The gravity and stillness of your youth
The world hath noted, and your name is great
In mouths of wisest censure; What's the matter,
That you unlace your reputation thus,
And spend your rich opinion¹⁶, for the name
Of a night brawler? give me answer to it.

Mon. Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger;
Your officer, Iago, can inform you—
While I spare speech, which something now offends
me:—

Of all that I do know: nor know I aught
By me that's said or done amiss this night;
Unless self-charity¹⁷ be sometime a vice;
And to defend ourselves it be a sin,
When violence assails us.

Oth. Now, by heaven,
My blood begins my safer guides to rule;
And passion, having my best judgment collied¹⁸,
Assays to lead the way: If I once stir,
Or do but lift this arm, the best of you
Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know
How this foul rout began, who set it on;
And he that is approv'd¹⁹ in this offence,
Though he had twinn'd with me, both at a birth,
Shall lose me.—What! in a town of war,
Yet wild, the people's hearts brimful of fear,
To manage private and domestick quarrel,

¹⁶ Throw away and squander your valuable *character*. Opinion for *reputation* or *character* occurs in other places. See vol. v. p. 242, note 3.

¹⁷ Care of one's self.

¹⁸ *Collied* is *blackened*, as with smut or coal, and figuratively means here *obscured*, *darkened*. See vol. ii. p. 226, note 11.

¹⁹ Convicted by proof.

In night, and on the court of guard and safety ²⁰!

'Tis monstrous ²¹.—Iago, who began it?

Mon. If partially affin'd ²², or leagu'd in office,
Thou dost deliver more or less than truth,
Thou art no soldier.

Iago. Touch me not so near:
I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth,
Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio;
Yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth
Shall nothing wrong him.—Thus it is, general.
Montano and myself being in speech,
There comes a fellow, crying out for help;
And Cassio following with determin'd sword ²³,
To execute upon him: Sir, this gentleman
Steps in to Cassio, and entreats his pause;
Myself the crying fellow did pursue,
Lest, by his clamour (as it so fell out),
The town might fall in fright: he, swift of foot,
Outran my purpose; and I return'd the rather
For that I heard the clink and fall of swords,
And Cassio high in oath; which, till to-night,
I ne'er might say before: when I came back

²⁰ The old copies read:—

'In night, and on the court *and* guard of safety.'

Malone made the necessary transposition, which he justifies by irrefragable proof; but Steevens obstinately opposed the emendation, and retained the old mumpsimus in the text out of a spirit of contradiction!

²¹ *Monstrous* is here used as a trisyllable, as it is again in *Macbeth*, Act iii. Sc. 6, p. 279.

²² *Affined* is 'bound by proximity of relationship,' but here it means 'related by nearness of office.' In the first scene it is used in the first of these senses:—

'If I, in any just term, am *affin'd*
To love the Moor.'

²³ The old copy reads:—

'And Cassio following *him* with determin'd sword.'

The word *him* seems to have crept in from the compositor's eye glancing on the word in the next line.

(For this was brief) I found them close together,
 At blow, and thrust; even as again they were,
 When you yourself did part them.
 More of this matter can I not report:—
 But men are men; the best sometimes forget:—
 Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,—
 As men in rage strike those that wish them best,—
 Yet, surely, Cassio, I believe, receiv'd,
 From him that fled, some strange indignity,
 Which patience could not pass.

Oth. I know, Iago,
 Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,
 Making it light to Cassio:—Cassio, I love thee;
 But never more be officer of mine.—

Enter DESDEMONA, attended.

Look, if my gentle love be not rais'd up;—
 I'll make thee an example.

Des. What's the matter, dear?

Oth. All's well now, sweeting; Come away to bed.
 Sir, for your hurts,
 Myself will be your surgeon; Lead him off²⁴.

[To MONTANO, who is led off.]

Iago, look with care about the town;
 And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted.—
 Come, Desdemona; 'tis the soldiers' life,
 To have their balmy slumbers wak'd with strife.

[Exeunt all but IAGO and CASSIO.]

Iago. What, are you hurt, lieutenant?

Cas. Ay, past all surgery.

Iago. Marry, heaven forbid!

Cas. Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I

²⁴ Malone thinks that the words—'Lead him off' were originally a marginal stage direction, as it was common to express them in imperative terms:—Play musick.—Ring the bell.—Lead him off,' &c.

have lost my reputation! I have lost the immortal part, sir, of myself, and what remains is bestial.—My reputation, Iago, my reputation.

Iago. As I am an honest man, I thought you had received some bodily wound; there is more offence in that, than in reputation. Reputation is an idle and most false imposition; oft got without merit, and lost without deserving: You have lost no reputation at all, unless you repute yourself such a loser. What, man! there are ways to recover the general again: You are but now cast in his mood²⁵, a punishment more in policy than in malice; even so as one would beat his offenceless dog, to affright an imperious lion: sue to him again, and he's yours.

Cas. I will rather sue to be despised, than to deceive so good a commander, with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk? and speak parrot²⁶? and squabble? swagger? swear? and discourse fustian with one's own shadow?—O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee—devil!

Iago. What was he that you followed with your sword? What had he done to you?

Cas. I know not.

Iago. Is it possible?

Cas. I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore.—O, that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains! that we should, with joy, revel, pleasure, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

²⁵ Thrown off, dismissed in his anger.

²⁶ i. e. talk idly, utter all you know. From *Drunk*, &c. to *shadow*, inclusively, is wanting in the quarto 1622.

Iago. Why, but you are now well enough : How came you thus recovered ?

Cas. It hath pleased the devil drunkenness, to give place to the devil, wrath : one unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

Iago. Come, you are too severe a moraler : As the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen ; but, since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

Cas. I will ask him for my place again ; he shall tell me, I am a drunkard ! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast ! O strange !—Every inordinate cup is unblessed, and the ingredient is a devil.

Iago. Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used ; exclaim no more against it. And, good lieutenant, I think, you think I love you.

Cas. I have well approved it, sir,—I drunk !

Iago. You, or any man living, may be drunk at some time, man. I'll tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general ;—I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and denotement²⁷ of her parts and graces :—confess yourself freely to her ; importune her ; she'll help to put you in your place again ; she is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, that she holds it a vice in her goodness, not to do more than she is requested ; This broken joint²⁸ between you

²⁷ The old copies read—*devotement*, an error arising from a single letter being turned upside down. Theobald made the correction.

²⁸ Thus the folio. The quarto 1622 reads—this brawl.

and her husband, entreat her to splinter; and, my fortunes against any lay²⁹ worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before.

Cas. You advise me well.

Iago. I protest, in the sincerity of love, and honest kindness.

Cas. I think it freely; and, betimes in the morning, I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me: I am desperate of my fortunes, if they check me here.

Iago. You are in the right. Good night, lieutenant; I must to the watch.

Cas. Good night, honest Iago. [*Exit CASSIO.*]

Iago. And what's he then, that says,—I play the villain?

When this advice is free³⁰, I give, and honest,
 Probal to thinking, and (indeed) the course
 To win the Moor again? For, 'tis most easy
 The inclining³¹ Desdemona to subdue
 In any honest suit: she's fram'd as fruitful³²
 As the free elements. And then for her
 To win the Moor,—were't to renounce his baptism,
 All seals and symbols of redeemed sin,—
 His soul is so enfetter'd to her love,
 That she may make, unmake, do what she list,
 Even as her appetite shall play the god
 With his weak function. How am I then a villain,
 To counsel Cassio to this parallel course³³,
 Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!

²⁹ Bet or wager.

³⁰ i. e. *liberal*. Such as honest openness or frank good will would give. There may be such a contraction of the word *probable* as that in the next line, but it has not yet been met with elsewhere. Churchyard has many abbreviations equally violent.

³¹ *Inclining* here signifies *compliant*.

³² Corresponding to *benigna*, ἀφθονη. Liberal, bountiful as the elements, out of which all things were produced.

³³ *Parallel course* for course level or even with his design.

When devils will their blackest sins put on,
 They do suggest at first with heavenly shows³⁴,
 As I do now: For while this honest fool
 Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes,
 And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
 I'll pour this pestilence³⁵ into his ear,—
 That she repeals³⁶ him for her body's lust;
 And, by how much she strives to do him good,
 She shall undo her credit with the Moor.
 So will I turn her virtue into pitch;
 And out of her own goodness make the net,
 That shall enmesh them all.—How now, Roderigo

Enter RODERIGO.

Rod. I do follow here in the chase, not like
 hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry.
 My money is almost spent; I have been to-night
 exceedingly well cudgelled; and, I think, the issue
 will be—I shall have so much experience for my
 pains: and so, with no money at all, and a little
 more wit, return to Venice.

Iago. How poor are they, that have not patience!—
 What wound did ever heal, but by degrees?
 Thou know'st we work by wit, and not by witchcraft
 And wit depends on dilatory time.
 Does't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee,
 And thou, by that small hurt, hath cashier'd Cassio.
 Though other things grow fair against the sun,
 Yet fruits, that blossom first, will first be ripe³⁷:

³⁴ When devils mean to *instigate* men to commit the most atrocious crimes, they *prompt* or *tempt* at first with heavenly shows &c.

³⁵ *Pestilence* for *poison*.

³⁶ i. e. *recalls* him, from the Fr. *rappeler*.

³⁷ The *blossoming* or fair appearance of things, to which Iago alludes, is the removal of Cassio. As their plan had already blossomed, so there was good ground for expecting that the fruit of it would soon be ripe.

Content thyself awhile.—By the mass³⁸, 'tis morning;
 Pleasure, and action, make the hours seem short.—
 Retire thee; go where thou art billeted:
 Away, I say; thou shalt know more hereafter:
 Nay, get thee gone. [*Exit ROD.*] Two things are
 to be done,—
 My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress;
 I'll set her on;
 Myself, the while, to draw³⁹ the Moor apart,
 And bring him jump⁴⁰ when he may Cassio find
 Soliciting his wife; Ay, that's the way;
 Dull not device by coldness and delay. [*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Before the Castle.*

Enter CASSIO and some Musicians.

Cas. Masters, play here, I will content your pains,
 Something that's brief; and bid—good morrow,
 general¹. [*Musick.*]

Enter Clown.

Clo. Why, masters, have your instruments been
 at Naples, that they speak i'the nose thus²?

³⁸ The folio reads—*In troth*, an alteration made in the play-house copy by the interference of the master of the revels.

³⁹ Some modern editions read—'Myself the while *will* draw.' But the old copies are undoubtedly right. An imperfect sentence was intended. Iago is ruminating upon his plan.

⁴⁰ i. e. just at the time. So in *Hamlet*:—

'Thus twice before, and *jump* at this dead hour.'

¹ It was usual for friends to serenade a new married couple on the morning after the celebration of the marriage, or to greet them with a *morning song* to bid them good morrow. See *Romeo and Juliet*, Act iii. Sc. 5. Ritson's note about the *waits* is nothing to the purpose.

² So in *The Merchant of Venice*:—'The bagpipe sings i'the

1 *Mus.* How, sir, how!

Clo. Are these, I pray you, called wind instruments?

1 *Mus.* Ay, marry, are they, sir.

Clo. O, thereby hangs a tail.

1 *Mus.* Whereby hangs a tale, sir?

Clo. Marry, sir, by many a wind instrument that I know. But, masters, here's money for you; and the general so likes your musick, that he desires you of all loves³, to make no more noise with it.

1 *Mus.* Well, sir, we will not.

Clo. If you have any musick that may not be heard, to't again: but, as they say, to hear musick, the general does not greatly care.

1 *Mus.* We have none such, sir.

Clo. Then put up your pipes in your bag, for I'll away: Go; vanish into air; away.

[*Exeunt* Musicians.]

Cas. Dost thou hear, my honest friend?

Clo. No, I hear not your honest friend; I hear you.

Cas. Pr'ythee, keep up thy quilllets⁴. There's a poor piece of gold for thee: if the gentlewoman that attends the general's wife be stirring, tell her, there's one Cassio entreats her a little favour of speech: Wilt thou do this?

Clo. She is stirring, sir; if she will stir hither, I shall seem to notify unto her.

[*Exit.*]

Enter IAGO.

Cas. Do, good my friend.—In happy time, Iago.

Iago. You have not been a-bed then?

Cas. Why, no; the day had broke

nose.' Rabelais somewhere speaks of 'a blow over the nose with a Naples cowl-staff.' The allusion is obvious.

³ i. e. for love's sake. We have this adjuration again in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

⁴ See vol. ii. p. 368, note 22, and *Hamlet*, Act v. Sc. i.

Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago,
To send in to your wife: My suit to her
Is, that she will to virtuous Desdemona
Procure me some access.

Iago. I'll send her to you presently;
And I'll devise a mean to draw the Moor
Out of the way, that your converse and business
May be more free. [*Exit.*

Cas. I humbly thank you for't. I never knew
A Florentine more kind and honest⁵.

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. Good morrow, good lieutenant: I am sorry
For your displeasure⁶; but all will soon be well.
The general, and his wife, are talking of it;
And she speaks for you stoutly: The Moor replies,
That he, you hurt, is of great fame in Cyprus,
And great affinity; and that, in wholesome wisdom,
He might not but refuse you: but, he protests, he
loves you;
And needs no other suitor, but his likings,
To take the saf'st occasion by the front⁷,
To bring you in again.

Cas. Yet, I beseech you,—

⁵ In consequence of this line a doubt has been entertained concerning the country of Iago. Cassio was undoubtedly a Florentine, as appears by the first scene of the play, where he is expressly called one. That Iago was a Venetian is proved by a speech in the third scene of this act, and by what he says in the fifth act, after having stabbed Roderigo:—

' *Iago.* Alas, my dear friend and countryman Roderigo!

' *Gra.* What, of *Venice*?

' *Iago.* Yes.'

All that Cassio means to say in the present passage is, I never experienced more honesty and kindness even in one of my own countrymen.

⁶ i. e. the displeasure you have incurred from Othello.

⁷ This line is wanting in the folio.

If you think fit, or that it may be done,
Give me advantage of some brief discourse
With Desdemona alone.

Emil. 'Pray you, come in;
I will bestow you where you shall have time
To speak your bosom freely.

Cas. I am much bound to you⁸.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and Gentlemen.

Oth. These letters give, Iago, to the pilot;
And, by him, do my duties to the state¹:
That done, I will be walking on the works,
Repair there to me.

Iago. Well, my good lord, I'll do't.

Oth. This fortification, gentlemen,—shall we see't?

Gent. We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Before the Castle.*

Enter DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and EMILIA.

Des. Be thou assur'd, good Cassio, I will do
All my abilities in thy behalf.

Emil. Good madam, do; I know, it grieves my
husband,
As if the case² were his.

Des. O, that's an honest fellow.—Do not doubt,
Cassio,
But I will have my lord and you again
As friendly as you were.

⁸ This speech is omitted in the first quarto.

¹ Thus the quarto 1622. Folio—'to the senate.'

² Folio reads—'As if the cause were his.'

Cas. Bounteous madam,
 Whatever shall become of Michael Cassio,
 He's never any thing but your true servant.

Des. O, sir³, I thank you: You do love my lord:
 You have known him long; and be you well assur'd,
 He shall in strangeness stand no further off
 Than in a politick distance.

Cas. Ay, but, lady,
 That policy may either last so long⁴,
 Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,
 Or breed itself so out of circumstance,
 That, I being absent, and my place supplied,
 My general will forget my love and service.

Des. Do not doubt that; before Emilia here,
 I give thee warrant of thy place: assure thee,
 If I do vow a friendship, I'll perform it
 To the last article: my lord shall never rest;
 I'll watch him tame⁵, and talk him out of patience;
 His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift;
 I'll intermingle every thing he does
 With Cassio's suit: Therefore be merry, Cassio;
 For thy solicitor shall rather die,
 Than give thy cause away.

³ Thus the quarto 1622. The folio reads—'I know't, I thank you.'

⁴ 'He may either of himself think it politick to keep me out of office so long, or he may be satisfied with such slight reasons, or so many accidents may make him think my readmission at that time improper, that I may be quite forgotten.'—*Johnson*.

⁵ Hawks and other birds are tamed by keeping them from sleep. To this Shakspeare alludes. So in Cartwright's *Lady Errant*:—

'——— We'll keep you
 As they do hawks, *watching* until you leave
 Your wildness.'

And in Davenant's *Just Italian*:—

'They've *watch'd* my hardy violence so tame.'

Enter OTHELLO, and IAGO, at a distance.

Emil. Madam, here comes
My lord.

Cas. Madam, I'll take my leave.

Des. Why, stay,
And hear me speak.

Cas. Madam, not now; I am very ill at ease,
Unfit for mine own purposes.

Des. Well, well,
Do your discretion. [*Exit CASSIO.*]

Iago. Ha! I like not that.

Oth. What dost thou say?

Iago. Nothing, my lord: or if—I know not what.

Oth. Was not that Cassio, parted from my wife?

Iago. Cassio, my lord? No, sure, I cannot
think it,

That he would steal away so guiltylike,
Seeing you coming.

Oth. I do believe 'twas he.

Des. How now, my lord?
I have been talking with a suitor here,
A man that languishes in your displeasure.

Oth. Who is't, you mean?

Des. Why, your lieutenant Cassio. Good my lord,
If I have any grace, or power to move you,
His present reconciliation⁶ take;
For, if he be not one that truly loves you,
That errs in ignorance, and not in cunning⁷,
I have no judgment in an honest face:
I pr'ythee call him back.

Oth. Went he hence now?

⁶ i. e. 'take his present atonement,' or submission. The words were formerly synonymous.

⁷ *Cunning* here signifies *knowledge*, the ancient sense of the word.

Des. Ay, sooth; so humbled,
That he hath left part of his grief with me;
I suffer with him. Good love, call him back.

Oth. Not now, sweet Desdemona; some other time.

Des. But shall't be shortly?

Oth. The sooner, sweet, for you.

Des. Shall't be to-night at supper?

Oth. No, not to-night.

Des. To-morrow dinner then?

Oth. I shall not dine at home;
I meet the captains at the citadel.

Des. Why then, to-morrow night; or Tuesday
morn;

Or Tuesday noon, or night; or Wednesday morn;—
I pray thee, name the time; but let it not
Exceed three days: in faith, he's penitent;
And yet his trespass, in our common reason
(Save that, they say, the wars must make examples
Out of their best⁸), is not almost a fault
To incur a private check: When shall he come?
Tell me, Othello. I wonder in my soul,
What you could ask me, that I should deny,
Or stand so mammering⁹ on. What! Michael
Cassio,

That came a wooing with you¹⁰, and so many a time,
When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,
Hath ta'en your part; to have so much to do
To bring him in! Trust me, I could do much,—

Oth. 'Pr'ythee, no more: let him come when he
will;

I will deny thee nothing.

⁸ The severity of military discipline must not spare the *best men* of the army, when their punishment may afford a wholesome *example*.

⁹ So *hesitating*, in such doubtful suspense. So in Lyly *Euphues*, 1580:—'Neither stand in a *mamering* whether it be best to depart or not.' The quarto 1622 reads—*muttering*.

¹⁰ See Act i. Sc. 2, note 15.

Des. Why, this is not a boon;
 'Tis as I should entreat you wear your gloves,
 Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm;
 Or sue to you to do peculiar profit
 To your own person: Nay, when I have a suit,
 Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed,
 It shall be full of poize¹¹ and difficulty,
 And fearful to be granted.

Oth. I will deny thee nothing:
 Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this,
 To leave me but a little to myself.

Des. Shall I deny you? no: Farewell, my lord.

Oth. Farewell, my Desdemona: I will come to
 thee straight.

Des. Emilia, come:—Be it as your fancies teach
 you;
 Whate'er you be, I am obedient.

[*Exit with EMILIA.*

Oth. Excellent wretch¹²! Perdition catch my soul,
 But I do love thee! and when I love thee not,
 Chaos is come again¹³.

¹¹ i. e. of weight.

¹² 'The meaning of the word *wretch* is not generally understood. It is now in some parts of England a term of the fondest and softest tenderness. It expresses the utmost degree of amiableness, joined with an idea which perhaps all tenderness includes, of feebleness, softness, and want of protection. Othello, considering Desdemona as excelling in beauty and virtue, soft and timorous by her sex, and by her situation absolutely in his power, calls her *Excellent wretch*! It may be expressed, 'Dear, harmless, helpless excellence.'—*Johnson*. Sir W. Davenant, in his *Cruel Brother*, uses the word twice with the same meaning:—'*Excellent wretch*!' with a timorous modesty she stifles up her utterance.'

¹³ I think with Malone that Othello is meant to say, 'Ere I cease to love thee, the world itself shall be reduced to its primitive chaos. So in *Venus and Adonis*:—

'For he being dead, with him is beauty slain,
 And beauty dead, black *Chaos comes again*.'

Shakspeare's meaning is more fully expressed in *The Winter's Tale*:—

Iago. My noble lord,——

Oth. What dost thou say, Iago?

Iago. Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,

Know of your love?

Oth. He did, from first to last: Why dost thou ask?

Iago. But for a satisfaction of my thought;
No further harm.

Oth. Why of thy thought, Iago?

Iago. I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

Oth. O, yes; and went between us very oft.

Iago. Indeed?

Oth. Indeed! ay, indeed:—Discern'st thou aught in that?

Is he not honest?

Iago. Honest, my lord?

Oth. Ay, honest.

Iago. My lord, for aught I know.

Oth. What dost thou think?

Iago. Think, my lord?

Oth. Think, my lord!

By heaven, he echoes me,

As if there were some monster in his thought

Too hideous to be shown.—Thou dost mean something:

' It cannot fail but by
The violation of my faith,—and then
Let nature crush the sides o'the earth together
And mar the seeds within !'

There is the same thought in Muretus, a Latin poet of the sixteenth century:—

' Tune meo elabi possis de pectore, Lacci
Aut ego, dum vivam, non meminisse tui?
Ante vel istius mundi compage soluta,
Tetras in antiquum sit reditura chaos.'

And in Buchanan:—

' Cesset amor, pariter cessabunt fœdera rerum;
In chaos antiquum cuncta elementa ruent.'

I heard thee say but now,—Thou lik'dst not that,
 When Cassio left my wife; What did'st not like?
 And, when I told thee—he was of my counsel
 In my whole course of wooing, thou cry'dst, *Indeed?*
 And didst contract and purse thy brow together,
 As if thou then had'st shut up in thy brain
 Some horrible conceit: If thou dost love me,
 Show me thy thought.

Iago. My lord, you know I love you.

Oth. I think, thou dost:
 And,—for I know thou art full of love and honesty,
 And weigh'st thy words before thou giv'st them
 breath,—

Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more:
 For such things, in a false disloyal knave,
 Are tricks of custom; but, in a man that's just,
 They are close denotements¹⁴, working from the heart,
 That passion cannot rule.

Iago. For Michael Cassio,—
 I dare be sworn, I think that he is honest.

Oth. I think so too.

Iago. Men should be what they seem;
 Or, those that be not, 'would, they might seem none¹⁵!

Oth. Certain, men should be what they seem.

Iago. Why then, I think Cassio's an honest man.

Oth. Nay, yet there's more in this:
 I pray thee, speak to me as to thy thinkings,

¹⁴ Thus the earliest quarto. The first folio reads—'close dilations.' Which Johnson says was intended for 'cold delations,' i. e. *occult* and *secret accusations*, working involuntary from the heart. The second folio reads—'cold dilations,' which Warburton explains 'cold keeping back a secret,' which men of phlegmatic constitutions, whose arts are not swayed or governed by their passions, we find can do: while more sanguine tempers reveal themselves at once, and without reserve.' Upton says *dilations* comes from the Latin *dilationes*, delayings, pauses.

¹⁵ I believe the meaning is, 'would they might no longer seem or bear the shape of men.'—Johnson.

As thou dost ruminatè; and give thy worst of thoughts
The worst of words.

Iago. Good my lord, pardon me;
Though I am bound to every act of duty,
I am not bound to that all slaves are free to ¹⁶.
Utter my thoughts? Why, say, they are vile and
false,—

As where's that palace, whereinto foul things
Sometimes intrude not ¹⁷? who has a breast so pure,
But some uncleanly apprehensions
Keep leets ¹⁸, and law-days, and in session sit
With meditations lawful?

Oth. Thou dost conspire against thy friend, Iago,
If thou but think'st him wrong'd, and mak'st his ear
A stranger to thy thoughts.

Iago. I do beseech you,—
Though I, perchance, am vicious in my guess,
As, I confess, it is my nature's plague
To spy into abuses: and, oft, my jealousy
Shapes faults that are not,—I entreat you then,

¹⁶ 'I am not bound to do that which even slaves are not bound to do.' So in *Cymbeline*:—

' ——— O, Pisanio,
Every good servant does not all commands,
No bond but to do just ones.'

¹⁷ ' ——— No perfection is so absolute
That some impurity doth not pollute.'

Rape of Lucrece.

¹⁸ 'Who has so virtuous a breast that some impure conceptions and uncharitable surmises will not sometimes enter into it; hold a session there, as in a regular court, and "bench by the side" of authorised and lawful thoughts.' In the poet's thirtieth sonnet we find the same imagery:—

'When to the sessions of sweet silent thoughts
I summon up remembrance of things past.'

A *leet* is also called a *law day*. 'This court, in whose manor soever kept, was accounted the king's court, and commonly held every half year,' it was a meeting of the hundred 'to certify the king of the good manners and government of the inhabitant &c.

From one that so imperfectly conjects¹⁹,
 You'd take no notice? nor build yourself a trouble
 Out of his scattering and unsure observance:
 It were not for your quiet, nor your good,
 Nor for my manhood, honesty, or wisdom,
 To let you know my thoughts.

Oth. What dost thou mean?

Iago. Good name, in man, and woman, dear my
 lord,

Is the immediate jewel of their souls:
 Who steals my purse, steals trash²⁰; 'tis something,
 nothing;

'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thou-
 sands²¹;

But he that filches from me my good name,
 Robs me of that, which not enriches him,
 And makes me poor indeed.

Oth. By heaven, I'll know thy thought.

Iago. You cannot, if my heart were in your hand;
 Nor shall not, whilst 'tis in my custody.

Oth. Ha!

Iago. O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;
 It is the green-ey'd monster, which doth make²²

¹⁹ i. e. conjectures. Thus the quarto 1622. The folio reads:—

‘ ——— and of my jealousy
 Shapes faults that are not, *that your wisdom*
 From one that so imperfectly conceits,
 Would take no notice.’

²⁰ The sacred writings were perhaps in the poet's thoughts:
 ‘ A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving
 favour than silver and gold.’ Proverbs, xxii. 1.

²¹ ‘ Nunc ager Umbreni sub nomine nuper Ofelli
 Dictus, erit nulli proprius; sed cedet in usum
 Nunc mihi, nunc alii.’ *Horat. Sat. lib. ii. 2.*

So in Camden's Remaines, 1605, p. 107:—

‘ Nunc mea, mox hujus, set postea nescio cujus.’

²² The old copy reads *mock*. The emendation is Hanmer's.
 Steevens attempted to justify the old reading; but his argu-
 ments are not convincing; and the slight alteration of the text

The meat it feeds on: That cuckold lives in bliss,
 Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger;
 But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er,
 Who dotes, yet doubts; suspects, yet strongly loves!

Oth. O misery!

Iago. Poor, and content, is rich, and rich enough;
 But riches, fineless²³, is as poor as winter,
 To him that ever fears he shall be poor:—
 Good heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend
 From jealousy!

Oth. Why! why is this?
 Think'st thou, I'd make a life of jealousy,
 To follow still the changes of the moon
 With fresh suspicions? No: to be once in doubt,
 Is—once to be resolv'd: Exchange me for a goat,

renders it so much more clear, elegant, and poetical, and has been so well defended by Malone and others, that I have not hesitated to adopt it. The following passages have been adduced in confirmation of Hanmer's reading. At the end of the third Act Desdemona remarks on Othello's jealousy:—

'Alas the day! I never gave him cause.'

To which Emilia replies:—

'But jealous fools will not be answer'd so,
 They are not jealous ever for the cause,
 But jealous, for they are jealous: 'tis a monster
 Begot upon itself, born on itself.'

And in Daniel's *Rosamond*, 1592; a poem which Shakspeare has more than once imitated in *Romeo and Juliet*:—

'O Jealousy——

*Feeding upon suspect that doth renew thee,
 Happy were lovers, if they never knew thee.'*

The same idea occurs in Massinger's *Picture*, where Matthias, speaking of the groundless jealousy he entertained of Sophia's possible inconstancy, says:—

'—— but why should I nourish
 A fury here, and with imagin'd food,
 Holding no real ground on which to raise
 A building of suspicion she was ever,
 Or can be false.'

²³ i. e. endless, unbounded. Warburton observes that this is finely expressed—*winter* producing no fruits.

When I shall turn the business of my soul
To such exsufflicate²⁴ and blown surmises,
Matching thy inference²⁵. 'Tis not to make me
jealous,

To say—my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances well;
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous²⁶:
Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw
The smallest fear, or doubt of her revolt;
For she had eyes, and chose me: No, Iago;
I'll see, before I doubt; when I doubt, prove;
And, on the proof, there is no more but this,—
Away at once with love, or jealousy.

Iago. I am glad of this, for now I shall have reason
To show the love and duty that I bear you
With franker spirit: therefore, as I am bound,

²⁴ No instance of this word has elsewhere occurred. It appears to me to be intended to convey the meaning of *whispered*, or *made out of breath*. *Sufflation* is interpreted by Phillips, 'a puffing up, a making to swell with blowing.' In Plautus we have, '*Sufflavit nescio quid uxore*;' which Cooper renders, '*He hath whispered somewhat in his wives eare whatsoever it be.*' He also translates '*Rumoris nescio quid afflaverat*, a certain brute or rumor come to my hearing.' Though I do not agree with the following explanation, I think it right to lay it before the reader:—'It seems to me (says Mr. Todd), that all the critics have overlooked the meaning of the passage. *Exsufflicate* may be traced to the low Latin *exsufflare*, to spit down upon, an ancient form of exorcising; and, figuratively, to spit out in abhorrence or contempt. See Du Cange, in v. *exsufflare*. *Exsufflicate* may thus signify *contemptible*: and Othello may be supposed to mean, that he would not change the noble designs, that then employed his thoughts, for *contemptible* and *despicable* surmises.'—*Johnson's Dict.* in v. *Exsuffolate*.

²⁵ i. e. such as you have mentioned in describing the torments of jealousy.

²⁶ A passage in All's Well that Ends Well is perhaps the best comment on the sentiments of Othello:—'I have those good hopes of her education promises: his disposition she inherits; which makes fair gifts fairer.' *Gratior e pulchro veniens et corpore virtus.*

Receive it from me:—I speak not yet of proof.
 Look to your wife; observe her well with Cassio;
 Wear you eye—thus, not jealous, nor secure:
 I would not have your free and noble nature,
 Out of self-bounty²⁷, be abus'd; look to't:
 I know our country disposition well;
 In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks
 They dare not show their husbands; their best con-
 science

Is—not to leave undone, but keep unknown²⁸.

Oth. Dost thou say so?

Iago. She did deceive her father, marrying you;
 And, when she seem'd to shake, and fear your looks,
 She lov'd them most.

Oth. And so she did.

Iago. Why, go to, then;
 She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,
 To seel her father's eyes up, close as oak²⁹,—
 He thought, 'twas witchcraft:—But I am much to
 blame;

I humbly do beseech you of your pardon,
 For too much loving you.

²⁷ *Self bounty for inherent generosity.*

²⁸ This and the following argument of Iago ought to be deeply impressed on every reader. Deceit and falsehood, whatever conveniences they may for a time promise or produce, are in the sum of life obstacles to happiness. Those who profit by the cheat, distrust the deceiver, and the act by which kindness is sought puts an end to confidence.—The same objection may be made with a lower degree of strength against the imprudent generosity of disproportionate marriages. When the first heat of passion is over, it is easily succeeded by suspicion, that the same violence of inclination, which caused one irregularity, may stimulate to another; and those who have shown that their passions are too powerful for their prudence will, with very slight appearances against them, be censured, as not very likely to restrain them by their virtue.—*Johnson.*

²⁹ An expression from falconry: to *seel* a hawk is to sew up his eyelids. *Close as oak* means as close as the grain of oak.

Oth. I am bound to thee for ever.

Iago. I see, this hath a little dash'd your spirits.

Oth. Not a jot, not a jot.

Iago. Trust me, I fear it has.
I hope, you will consider, what is spoke
Comes from my love;—But, I do see you are
mov'd:—

I am to pray you, not to strain my speech
To grosser issues³⁰, nor to larger reach,
Than to suspicion.

Oth. I will not.

Iago. Should you do so, my lord,
My speech should fall into such vile success³¹
As my thoughts aim not at. Cassio's my worthy
friend:—

My lord, I see you are mov'd.

Oth. No, not much mov'd:—
I do not think but Desdemona's honest.

Iago. Long live she so! and long live you to
think so!

Oth. And yet, how nature erring from itself,—

Iago. Ay, there's the point:—As,—to be bold
with you,—

Not to affect many proposed matches,
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree;
Whereto, we see, in all things nature tends:
Foh! one may smell, in such, a will³² most rank,
Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.—
But pardon me; I do not, in position,

³⁰ *Issues* for conclusions.

³¹ *Success* here means *consequence* or *event*; as *successo*, in Italian. So in Sidney's *Arcadia*, p. 39, ed. 1613:—'Straight my heart misgave me some evil *success*!' And in *The Palace of Pleasure*:—'Fearing lest their case would sort to some pitifull *successes*.'

³² *Will* for *inclination* or *desire*. A *rank will* is a lustful inclination.

Distinctly speak of her: though I may fear,
Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,
May fall to match you with her country forms,
And (happily) repent.

Oth. Farewell, farewell:
If more thou dost perceive, let me know more;
Set on thy wife to observe: Leave me, Iago.

Iago. My lord, I take my leave. [*Going.*]

Oth. Why did I marry?—This honest creature,
doubtless,
Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.

Iago. My lord, I would, I might entreat your
honour
To scan this thing no further; leave it to time:
And though it be fit that Cassio have his place
(For, sure, he fills it up with great ability),
Yet, if you please to hold him off a while,
You shall by that perceive him and his means³³:
Note, if your lady strain his entertainment³⁴
With any strong or vehement importunity;
Much will be seen in that. In the mean time,
Let me be thought too busy in my fears
(As worthy cause I have, to fear—I am),
And hold her free, I do beseech your honour.

Oth. Fear not my government³⁵.

Iago. I once more take my leave. [*Exit.*]

Oth. This fellow's of exceeding honesty,
And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit³⁶,
Of human dealings: If I do prove her haggard³⁷,

³³ 'You shall discover whether he thinks his best *means*, his most powerful *interest*, is by the solicitation of your lady.'

³⁴ i. e. press hard his readmission to his pay and office. *Entertainment* was the military term for the admission of soldiers.

³⁵ Do not distrust my ability to contain my passion.

³⁶ *Learned* for *experienced*. The construction is, 'He knows with an experienced spirit all qualities of human dealings.'

³⁷ *Haggard* is *wild*, and therefore *libertine*. A haggard falcon

Though that her jesses ³⁸ were my dear heart-strings,
 I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind,
 To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black;
 And have not those soft parts of conversation
 That chamberers have³⁹:—Or, for I am declin'd
 Into the vale of years;—yet that's not much;—
 She's gone; I am abus'd; and my relief
 Must be to loathe her. O curse of marriage,
 That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
 And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad,
 And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,

was a wild hawk that had preyed for herself long before she was taken; sometimes also called a *ramage falcon*. From a passage in *The White Devil*, or *Vittoria Corombona*, 1612, it appears that *haggard* was a term of reproach, sometimes applied to a *wanton*:—‘Is this your perch, you *haggard*? fly to the stews.’ So in Shakerley Marmion’s *Holland’s Leaguer*, 1633:

‘Before these courtiers lick their lips at her,
 I’ll trust a wanton *haggard* in the wind.’

Again:—

‘For she is ticklish as any *haggard*,
 And quickly lost.’

³⁸ *Jesses* are short straps of leather tied about the foot of a hawk, by which she is held on the fist.—‘The falconers always let fly the hawk against the wind; if she flies with the wind behind her, she seldom returns. If therefore a hawk was for any reason to be dismissed, she was *let down the wind*, and from that time shifted for herself and preyed at fortune.’ This was told to Dr. Johnson by Mr. Clark. So in the *Spanish Gipsie*, 1653:

‘—— That young *lannerd* (i. e. hawk)

Whom you have such a mind to; if you can *whistle her*
 To come to *fist*, make trial, play the young *falconer*.’

Again in *Bonduca*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:—

‘—— he that basely

Whistled his honour *off to the wind*,’ &c.

And in Dryden’s *Annus Mirabilis*:—

‘Have you not seen, when *whistled* from the fist,

Some falcon stoops at what her eye *dèsign’d*,

And with her eagerness the quarry miss’d,

Straight flies at cheek, and clips it *down the wind*.’

³⁹ Men of intrigue. Chambering and wantonness are mentioned together in the Scriptures. με κοιταις is rendered *not in chambering* in the common-version.

Than keep a corner in the thing I love,
 For others' uses. Yet, 'tis the plague of great ones;
 Prerogativ'd are they less than the base;
 'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death;
 Even then this forked⁴⁰ plague is fated to us,
 When we do quicken⁴¹. Desdemona comes:

Enter DESDEMONA and EMILIA.

If she be false, O, then heaven mocks itself!—
 I'll not believe it.

Des. How now, my dear Othello?
 Your dinner, and the generous⁴² islanders
 By you invited, do attend your presence.

Oth. I am to blame.

Des. Why is your speech so faint? are you not
 well?

Oth. I have a pain upon my forehead here.

Des. 'Faith, that's with watching; 'twill away
 again:

Let me but bind it hard, within this hour
 It will be well.

Oth. Your napkin⁴³ is too little;

[*He puts the Handkerchief from him, and it drops.*
 Let it alone. Come, I'll go in with you.

⁴⁰ One of Sir John Harington's Epigrams will illustrate this
forked plague:—

'Actæon guiltless unawares espying
 Naked Diana bathing in her bowre
 Was plagued with HORNES; his dogs did him devoure;
 Wherefore take heed, ye that are curious, prying,
 With some such *forked plague* you be not smitten,
 And in your foreheads see your faults be written.'

⁴¹ i. e. when we begin to live.

⁴² 'The *generous* islanders' are the islanders of *rank, distinction*: *generosi*, Lat. See vol. ii. p. 92, note 4. This explanation however (as Steevens observes) may be too particular; for *generous* also signified *valiant*, of a *brave spirit*.

⁴³ In the north of England this term for a *handkerchief* is still used. The word occurs in *Macbeth*, *Julius Cæsar*, and other of these plays.

Des. I am very sorry that you are not well.

[*Exeunt* OTH. and DES.]

Emil. I am glad I have found this napkin;
This was her first remembrance from the Moor:
My wayward husband hath a hundred times
Woo'd me to steal it: but she so loves the token
(For he conjur'd her, she would ever keep it),
That she reserves it evermore about her,
To kiss, and talk to. I'll have the work ta'en out⁴⁴,
And give 't Iago:
What he'll do with it, heaven knows, not I;
I nothing, but to please his fantasy.

Enter IAGO.

Iago. How now! what do you here alone?

Emil. Do not you chide; I have a thing for you.

Iago. A thing for me?—it is a common thing.

Emil. Ha!

Iago. To have a foolish wife.

⁴⁴ That is, *copied*. Her first thoughts are to have a copy made of it for her husband, and restore the original to Desdemona: but the sudden coming in of Iago, in a surly humour, makes her alter her resolution, to please him. The same phrase afterwards occurs between Cassio and Bianca, in Sc. iv.

'This scheme of getting the work of this valued handkerchief copied, and restoring the original to Desdemona, was probably introduced by the poet to render Emilia less unamiable. It is remarkable that when she perceives Othello's fury on the loss of this token, though she is represented as affectionate to her mistress, she never attempts to relieve her from her distress; which she might easily have done by demanding the handkerchief from her husband, or divulging the story if he refused to restore it. But this would not have served the plot.—In Cinthio's Novel, while the artless Desdemona is caressing the child of Othello's ancient, the villain steals the handkerchief which hung at her girdle without the knowledge of his wife.'—*Malone*.

'This observation is very just; it is particularly striking in the representation; neither is the concluding apology to be admitted, as there is no reason why Emilia should be present when Othello demands the handkerchief.'—*Pye*.

Emil. O, is that all? What will you give me now
For that same handkerchief?

Iago. What handkerchief?

Emil. What handkerchief?

Why that the Moor first gave to Desdemona;
That which so often you did bid me steal.

Iago. Hast stolen it from her?

Emil. No, 'faith; she let it drop by negligence;
And, to the advantage⁴⁵, I, being here, took 't up.
Look, here it is.

Iago. A good wench; give it me.

Emil. What will you do with it, that you have
been so earnest
To have me filch it?

Iago. Why, what's that to you?
[*Snatching it.*

Emil. If it be not for some purpose of import,
Give it me again: Poor lady! she'll run mad,
When she shall lack it.

Iago. Be not you known of't⁴⁶; I have use for it.
Go, leave me. [Exit EMILIA.

I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,
And let him find it: Trifles, light as air,
Are, to the jealous, confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ. This may do something.
The Moor already changes with my poison:
Dangerous conceits are, in their natures, poisons,
Which, at the first, are scarce found to distaste;

⁴⁵ That is, I being *opportunistically* here, took it up.

⁴⁶ 'Seem as if you knew nothing of the matter.' The folio reads, 'Be not *acknown* on't.'—This word occurs in the *Life of Ariosto*, subjoined to Sir John Harington's translation of the *Orlando Furioso*, p. 418, ed. 1607:—'Some say he was married to her privilie, but durst not be *acknowne* of it.' Again in *Cornelia*, a tragedy, by Thomas Kyd, 1594:—

'Our friend's misfortune doth increase our own.

Cic. But ours of others will not be *acknown*.'

But, with a little act upon the blood,
Burn like the mines of sulphur.—I did say so⁴⁷:—

Enter OTHELLO.

Look, where he comes! Not poppy, nor mandra-
gora⁴⁸,

Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou ow'dst⁴⁹ yesterday.

Oth. Ha! ha! false to me?
To me?

Iago. Why, how now, general? no more of that.

Oth. Avaunt! be gone! thou hast set me on the
rack:—

I swear, 'tis better to be much abus'd,
Than but to know't a little.

Iago. How now, my lord?

Oth. What sense had I of her stolen hours of
lust⁵⁰?

⁴⁷ Iago first ruminates on the qualities of the passion which he is labouring to excite; and then proceeds to comment on its effects. 'Jealousy (says he), with the smallest operation on the blood, flames out with all the violence of sulphur,' &c.

'—— I did say so;

Look where he comes!'

i. e. I knew the least touch of such a passion would not permit the Moor a moment of repose:—I have just said that jealousy is a restless commotion of the mind; and look where Othello approaches, to confirm the propriety and justice of my observation.

Steevens.

⁴⁸ The mandrake has a soporifick quality, and the ancients used it when they wanted an opiate of the most powerful kind. See Antony and Cleopatra, Act i. Sc. 6.

⁴⁹ i. e. *possessedst*.

⁵⁰ A similar passage to this, and what follows it, is found in *The Witch*, by Middleton. In the same drama there is also a scene between Francisca and her brother Antonio, when she first excites his jealousy, which has several circumstances in common with the dialogue which passes between Iago and Othello on the same subject. It is more than probable that Middleton was the imitator. See vol. iv. p. 209.

I saw it not, thought it not, it harm'd not me :
 I slept the next night well, was free and merry ;
 I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips :
 He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stolen,
 Let him not know it, and he's not robb'd at all.

Iago. I am sorry to hear this.

Oth. I had been happy, if the general camp,
 Pioneers⁵¹ and all, had tasted her sweet body,
 So I had nothing known : O now, for ever,
 Farewell the tranquil mind ! farewell content !
 Farewell the plumed troop, and the big wars,
 That make ambition virtue ! O, farewell⁵² !
 Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,

⁵¹ The vilest of the camp. *Pioneers* were generally degraded soldiers. According to the old ordinances of war, a soldier who lost any part of his arms by negligence or play, was to be dismissed with punishment, or to be made 'some *abject pioneer*.'

⁵² There are some points of resemblance between this speech and the following lines in a poem of George Peele's 'A Farewell to the Famous and Fortunate Generals of our English Forces, Sir John Norris and Sir Francis Drake, 1589 :—

'Change love for armes ; gyrt to your blades, my boyes ;
 Your rests and muskets take, take helme and targe,
 And let god Mars his trumpet make you mirth,
 The *roaring cannon*, and the brazen trumpe,
 The *angry-sounding drum*, the *whistling fife*,
 The shriekes of men, the princelie courser's *ney*.'

Malone thought that Shakspeare might have received the hint for this speech from another passage in the old drama of *Comon Conditions*, 1576. To which Steevens replies, I know not why we should suppose that Shakspeare borrowed so common a repetition as these diversified *farewells* from any preceding drama. A string of *adieux* is perhaps the most tempting of all repetitions, because it serves to introduce a train of imagery, as well as to solemnify a speech or composition. Wolsey, like Othello, indulges himself in many farewells ; and the

'*Valete, aprica montium cacumina !*

Valete, opaca vallium cubilia !' &c.

are common to poets of different ages and countries. In Caven-
 dish's *Metrical Visions* there is a similar valedictory address
 to a variety of objects and circumstances. And Steevens in-
 stances another in which sixteen succeeding verses begin with
 the word *farewell*.

The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife⁵³,
 The royal banner; and all quality,
 Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war⁵⁴!
 And, O you mortal engines, whose rude throats
 The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,
 Farewell! Othello's occupation's gone!

Iago. Is it possible!—My lord,——

Oth. Villain, be sure thou prove my love a
 whore;

Be sure of it; give me the ocular proof;

[*Taking him by the Throat.*]

⁵³ In mentioning the *fife* joined to the *drum*, Shakspeare, as usual, paints from life; those instruments, accompanying each other, being used in his age by the English soldiery. The *fife*, however, as a martial instrument, was afterwards entirely discontinued among our troops for many years; but at length revived in the war before the last by the British guards under order of the duke of Cumberland, when they were encamped before Maestricht in 1747, and thence soon adopted into other English regiments of infantry. They took it from the allies with whom they served. This instrument accompanying the drum is of considerable antiquity in the European armies, particularly the German. In a curious picture, painted 1525, in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, representing the siege of Pavia by the French king, we see *fifes* and *drums*. In the diary of King Henry's siege of Bolloigne, 1544, (Rymer, Foed. xv. p. 53), mention is made of *drommes* and *viffleurs* marching at the head of the king's army. The *drum* and *fife* were also much used at shows and processions. At a stately masque on Shrove Tuesday, 1510, in which Henry VIII. was an actor, Holinshed mentions the entry of 'a *drum* and *fife*, apparelled in white damaske and grene bonnettes;' and at the Inner Temple celebration of Christmas (described by Leigh in his *Accidence of Armory*, 1576), 'We entered the prince his hall, where anon we heard the noise of *drum* and *fife*.' It will hardly be necessary to state that this note is abridged from one by Thomas Warton, whose passion for the spirit-stirring instruments to which it relates is upon record. The remainder of his note is an attempt to derive the word whiffler from *viffleur*, a *fifer*; but it is probable that it had another origin. See vol. v. p. 511, note 2.

⁵⁴ Davenant in his *Albovine*, and Fletcher in his *Prophets*, have each of them imitated this passage of Othello.

Or, by the worth of mine eternal soul⁵⁵,
 Thou hadst been better have been born a dog,
 Than answer my wak'd wrath.

Iago. Is it come to this?

Oth. Make me to see it; or (at the least) so prove it,
 That the probation bear no hinge, nor loop,
 To hang a doubt on: or, woe upon thy life!

Iago. My noble lord,——

Oth. If thou dost slander her, and torture me,
 Never pray more: abandon all remorse⁵⁶;
 On horror's head horrors accumulate:
 Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amaz'd,
 For nothing canst thou to damnation add,
 Greater than that.

Iago. O grace! O heaven, defend me!
 Are you a man? have you a soul, or sense?—
 God be wi' you; take mine office.—O wretched fool,
 That liv'st to make thine honesty, a vice!—
 O monstrous world! Take note, take note, O
 world,

To be direct and honest, is not safe.—
 I thank you for this profit; and, from hence,
 I'll love no friend, since love breeds such offence.

Oth. Nay, stay:—Thou should'st be honest.

Iago. I should be wise; for honesty's a fool,
 And loses that it works for.

Oth. By the world,
 I think my wife be honest, and think she is not;
 I think that thou art just, and think thou art not;
 I'll have some proof: Her name, that was as fresh
 As Dian's visage, is now begrim'd and black

⁵⁵ The quarto of 1622 reads 'man's eternal soul.' Perhaps an opposition was designed between *man* and *dog*.

⁵⁶ i. e. all tenderness of nature, all pity; the sense in which *remorse* is most frequently used by Shakspeare.

As mine own face⁵⁷.—If there be cords, or knives;
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
I'll not endure it⁵⁸.—'Would, I were satisfied!

Iago. I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion:
I do repent me, that I put it to you.
You would be satisfied?

Oth. Would? nay, I will.

Iago. And may: but, how? how satisfied, my lord?
Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on?
Behold her tupp'd?

Oth. Death and damnation! O!

Iago. It were a tedious difficulty, I think,
To bring them to that prospect: Damn them then,
If ever mortal eyes do see them bolster,
More than their own! What then? how then?
What shall I say? Where's satisfaction?
It is impossible you should see this,
Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys,
As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross
As ignorance made drunk. But yet, I say,
If imputation, and strong circumstances,—
Which lead directly to the door of truth,—
Will give you satisfaction, you may have it.

Oth. Give me a living⁵⁹ reason she's disloyal.

Iago. I do not like the office:
But, sith I am enter'd in this cause so far,—

⁵⁷ A similar image is found in Marlowe's *Lust's Dominion*; where the Moor says:—

' ————— Cardinal, this disgrace
Shall dye thy soul as inky as my face.'

⁵⁸ So in *Pericles*:—

' If fires be hot, knives sharp, or waters deep,
Untied I still my virgin knot will keep.'

⁵⁹ A *living reason* is a reason founded on fact and experience, not on surmise and conjecture; a reason that convinces the understanding as perfectly as if the fact were exhibited *to the life*.

Prick'd to it by foolish honesty and love,—
I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately;
And, being troubled with a raging tooth,
I could not sleep,

There are a kind of men so loose of soul,
That in their sleeps will mutter their affairs;
One of this kind is Cassio:

In sleep I heard him say,—*Sweet Desdemona,
Let us be wary, let us hide our loves!*

And then, sir, would he gripe and wring my hand,
Cry,—*O, sweet creature!* and then kiss me hard,
As if he pluck'd up kisses by the roots,
That grew upon my lips: then laid his leg
Over my thigh, and sigh'd, and kiss'd; and then
Cried,—*Cursed fate, that gave thee to the Moor!*

Oth. O monstrous! monstrous!

Iago. Nay, this was but his dream.

Oth. But this denoted a foregone conclusion⁶⁰;
'Tis a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream⁶¹.

Iago. And this may help to thicken other proofs,
That do demonstrate thinly.

Oth. I'll tear her all to pieces.

Iago. Nay, but be wise: yet we see nothing done⁶²;
She may be honest yet. Tell me but this,—
Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief,
Spotted with strawberries, in your wife's hand?

Oth. I gave her such a one; 'twas my first gift.

Iago. I know not that: but such a handkerchief
(I am sure it was your wife's), did I to-day
See Cassio wipe his beard with.

⁶⁰ Some *foregone conclusion* is some *former experience*. *Conclusion* is used for *experiment* or *trial* in several other places of these plays.

⁶¹ The old quarto gives this line to Iago, as well as the two which follow; in the folio it is given to Othello.

⁶² Iago says, 'Yet we see nothing done;' as an oblique and secret mock of what Othello had before said,—Give me the *ocular proof*.

Oth. If it be that,—

Iago. If it be that, or any that was hers,
It speaks against her with the other proofs.

Oth. O; that the slave had forty thousand lives;
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge!
Now do I see 'tis true⁶³.—Look here, Iago;
All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven⁶⁴:
'Tis gone.—

Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow⁶⁵ cell!
Yield up, O love, thy crown, and hearted throne⁶⁶,
To tyrannous hate! swell, bosom; with thy fraught⁶⁷;
For 'tis of aspicks' tongues!

Iago. Pray, be content.

⁶³ The quarto reads 'Now do I see 'tis *tune*.'

⁶⁴ So in Marlowe's *Lust's Dominion*:—

'Are these your fears? thus *blow them into air*.'

This was perhaps caught from Horace:—

'*Tradam protervis in mare Creticum
Portare ventis.*'

⁶⁵ *Hollow*, which has been stigmatized by Warburton as a poor unmeaning epithet, gives the idea of what Milton calls—

'——— the void profound
Of unessential night.'

Or the *inane profundum* of Lucretius. It is used indeed in Milton himself. *Paradise Lost*, b. i. v. 314:—

'He call'd so loud, that all the *hollow deep*
Of *hell* resounded.'

And in book i.:—

'A shout that tore *hell's concave*.'

Jasper Heywood, in his translation of Seneca's *Thyestes*, 1560, had long before used the phrase:—

'Where most prodigious ugly things the *hollow hell*
doth hide.'

And Arthur Hall, in his translation of Homer's eighth *Iliad*:—

'Into the *hollow* dreadful hole which *Tartare* men do call.'

⁶⁶ The heart on which thou wast enthroned. So in *Twelfth Night*:—

'It gives a very echo to the seat
Where love is *thron'd*.'

See *Romeo and Juliet*, Act v. Sc. 1, *ab init*.

⁶⁷ i. e. *swell*, because the fraught thou art charged with is of poison.

Oth. O, blood, Iago, blood!

Iago. Patience, I say; your mind, perhaps, may change.

Oth. Never, Iago. Like to the Pontick sea⁶⁸,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontick, and the Hellespont;
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
Till that a capable⁶⁹ and wide revenge
Swallow them up.—Now, by yond' marble hea-
ven⁷⁰,

In the due reverence of a sacred vow [Kneels.
I here engage my words.

Iago. Do not rise yet.— [Kneels.

Witness, you ever-burning lights above!
You elements that clip us round about!
Witness, that here Iago doth give up

⁶⁸ From the word *Like* to *marble heaven*, inclusively, is not found in the quarto 1622. Pope thinks that it would be better omitted, as an unnatural excursion in this place. Shakspeare probably derived his knowledge upon this subject from the second book and ninety-seventh chapter of Pliny's *Natural History*, 1601:—'And the sea Pontus evermore floweth and runneth out into Propontis; but the sea never retireth backe againe within Pontus.' Mr. Edwards conceived this simile might allude to Sir Philip Sidney's device, whose impress Camden, in his *Remains*, says, was the Caspian sea, with this motto, *Sine refluxu*.

⁶⁹ *Capable* seems to be here used for *capacious*, *comprehensive*. Nashe, in his *Pierce Pennilesse*, 1592, employs the word in the same manner:—'Then belike, quoth I, you make this word, *Dæmon*, a *capable* name, of gods, of men, of devils.'

⁷⁰ This expression occurs in Soliman and Perseda, 1599:—
'Now by the *marble* face of the welkin,' &c.
So in Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*, 1602:—
'And pleas'd the *marble* heavens.'

The execution⁷¹ of his wit, hands, heart,
To wrong'd Othello's service! let him command,
And to obey shall be in me remorse⁷²,
What bloody work soever.

Oth. I greet thy love,
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,
And will upon the instant put thee to't:
Within these three days let me hear thee say,
That Cassio's not alive.

Iago. My friend is dead; 'tis done, at your request:
But let her live.

Oth. Damn her, lewd minx; O, damn her!
Come, go with me apart; I will withdraw,
To furnish me with some swift means of death
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.

Iago. I am your own for ever. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *The same.*

Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, and Clown.

Des. Do you know, sirrah, where lieutenant Cassio lies?

Clo. I dare not say, he lies any where.

Des. Why, man?

Clo. He is a soldier; and for me to say a soldier lies, is stabbing.

Des. Go to; Where lodges he?

⁷¹ The first quarto reads *excellency*. By *execution* Shakspeare meant *employment* or *exercise*. So in *Love's Labour's Lost*:—

'Full of comparisons and wounding flouts
Which you on all estates will *execute*.'

And in *Troilus and Cressida*:—

'In fellest manner *execute* your arms.'

⁷² Shakspeare always uses *remorse* for *pity* or *commiseration*. 'Let him command whatever bloody business, and in me it shall be an act not of cruelty but of *pity* or *commiseration* to obey him.' The quarto reads, 'What bloody business ever.'

Clo. To tell you where he lodges, is to tell you where I lie¹.

Des. Can any thing be made of this?

Clo. I know not where he lodges; and for me to devise a lodging, and say—he lies here, or he lies there, were to lie in my own throat.

Des. Can you inquire him out, and be edified by report?

Clo. I will catechize the world for him; that is, make questions, and by them answer².

Des. Seek him, bid him come hither: tell him, I have moved my lord in his behalf, and hope, all will be well.

Clo. To do this, is within the compass of man's wit; and therefore I will attempt the doing it.

[*Exit.*

Des. Where should I lose that handkerchief, Emilia?

Emil. I know not, madam.

Des. Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse Full of cruzadoes³. And, but my noble Moor Is true of mind, and made of no such baseness As jealous creatures are, it were enough To put him to ill thinking.

¹ This and the following speech are wanting in the first quarto.

² i. e. and by them, *when answered*, form my own answer to you. The quaintness of the answer is in character.

³ *Cruzadoes* were not current, as it should seem, at Venice, though they certainly were in England, in the time of Shakspeare; who has here again departed from the strict propriety of national costume. It appears from Rider's Dictionary that there were three sorts of cruzadoes: one with a long cross, one with a short cross, and the great cruzado of Portugal. They were of gold, and weighed from two pennyweights six grains, to two pennyweights sixteen grains, and differed in value from six shillings and eightpence to nine shillings. The sovereigns who struck these coins were Emanuel and his son John of Portugal. Mr. Douce has given the figure of them in his Illustrations of Shakspeare.

Emil. Is he not jealous?

Des. Who, he? I think, the sun, where he was born,
Drew all such humours from him.

Emil. Look, where he comes.

Des. I will not leave him now, till Cassio
Be call'd to him.—How is't with you, my lord?

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. Well, my good lady.—[*Aside.*] O, hardness to dissemble!—
How do you, Desdemona?

Des. Well, my good lord.

Oth. Give me your hand: This hand is moist, my lady.

Des. It yet has felt no age, nor known no sorrow.

Oth. This argues fruitfulness, and liberal heart;—
Hot, hot, and moist; This hand of yours requires
A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
Much castigation, exercise devout;
For here's a young and sweating devil here,
That commonly rebels. 'Tis a good hand,
A frank one.

Des. You may, indeed, say so;
For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart.

Oth. A liberal hand: The hearts of old, gave hands;
But our new heraldry is—hands, not hearts⁴.

⁴ Warburton thought that this was a satirical allusion to the new order of baronets, created by James I. in 1611. Sir William Blackstone supports him in this supposition, and has pointed out a similar allusion in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. See vol. i. p. 208, note 2. But if the play was written in 1602, as Malone presumes, this is a sufficient refutation. Warburton has a further conceit, that by the word *hearts* the poet meant to allude to the gallantry of the reign of Elizabeth, in which men distinguished themselves by their *steel*; and that by *hands* those courtiers were pointed at, who served her inglorious successor by their gold. This is too fanciful to require an answer. —

Des. I cannot speak of this. Come now your promise.

Oth. What promise, chuck?

Des. I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

Oth. I have a salt and sullen^s rheum offends me; Lend me thy handkerchief.

Des. Here, my lord.

Oth. That which I gave you.

Des. I have it not about me.

Oth. Not?

Des. No, indeed, my lord.

Oth. That is a fault:

That handkerchief

Did an Egyptian to my mother give;

Steevens observes, that 'the absurdity of making Othello so familiar with British heraldry, the utter want of consistency as well as policy in any sneer of Shakspeare at the badge of honours instituted by a prince whom he was solicitous to flatter, and at whose court this very piece was acted in 1613, are strong arguments against the propriety of Warburton's explanation.'

In various parts of our poet's works he has alluded to the custom of plighting troth by the union of hands. So in *The Tempest*:—

'*Mir.* My husband then?

'*Fer.* Ay, with a heart as willing

As bondage e'er of freedom. Here's my *hand*.

Mir. And mine, with my *heart* in it.'

'The hearts of old (says Othello), dictated the union of *hands*, which formerly were joined with *the hearts* of the parties in them; but in our modern marriages *hands* alone are united, without *hearts*.'

There is a passage in the *Essays* of Sir William Cornwallis the younger, 1601, which may have suggested to Shakspeare the mention of this *new heraldry*:—'We of these later times, full of a nice curiositie, mislike all the performances of our *fore-fathers*; we say they were honest plaine men, but they want the capering wits of this ripe age. *They had wont to give their hands and hearts together, but we think it a finer grace to looke asquint, our hand looking one way and our heart another.*'

^s The folio reads 'sorry.' Rider explains *sullen* by *acerbus*, Latin.

She was a charmer⁶, and could almost read
The thoughts of people: she told her, while she
kept it,

'Twould make her amiable, and subdue my father
Entirely to her love; but if she lost it,
Or made a gift of it, my father's eye
Should hold her loathly, and his spirits should hunt
After new fancies: She, dying, gave it me;
And bid me, when my fate would have me wive,
To give it her. I did so: and take heed of't,
Make it a darling like your precious eye;
To lose or give't away, were such perdition,
As nothing else could match.

Des. Is it possible?

Oth. 'Tis true: there's magick in the web of it:
A sibyl, that had number'd in the world
The sun to make two hundred compasses,
In her prophetick fury sew'd the work;
The worms were hallow'd, that did breed the silk;
And it was dyed in mummy⁷, which the skilful
Conserv'd of maidens' hearts⁸.

Des. Indeed! is't true?

Oth. Most veritable; therefore look to't well.

⁶ A *charmer*, for an *enchanter*, is of common occurrence in the Psalms. So in Perkins's Discourse on Witchcraft, 1610:—
'By witches we understand not only those which kill and torment, but all *charm*ers, jugglers, all wizards, commonly called wise men and wise women,' &c.

⁷ The balsamic liquor running from *mummies* was formerly celebrated for its anti-epileptick virtues. We are now wise enough to know that the qualities ascribed to it are all imaginary; yet this fanciful medicine held a place in the druggists' shops till lately. It was much coveted by painters, as a transparent brown colour that threw a warmth into the shadows of a picture.

⁸ The quarto reads '*with the skilful conserves,*' &c. So in The Microcosmos of John Davies of Hereford, 4to. 1605:—

'Mummy made of the mere hart of love.'

Des. Then 'would to heaven, that I had never seen it.

Oth. Ha! wherefore?

Des. Why do you speak so startingly and rash?

Oth. Is't lost? is't gone? speak, is it out of the way?

Des. Heaven bless us!

Oth. Say you?

Des. It is not lost; But what an if it were?

Oth. Ha!

Des. I say it is not lost.

Oth. Fetch't, let me see it.

Des. Why, so I can, sir, but I will not now;

This is a trick, to put me from my suit;

I pray, let Cassio be receiv'd again.

Oth. Fetch me that handkerchief: my mind mis-gives.

Des. Come, come;

You'll never meet a more sufficient man.

Oth. The handkerchief,——

Des. I pray, talk me of Cassio⁹.

Oth. The handkerchief,——

Des. A man that, all his time,

Hath founded his good fortune on your love;

Shar'd dangers with you;——

Oth. The handkerchief,——

Des. In sooth,

You are to blame.

Oth. Away! [*Exit OTHELLO.*

Emil. Is not this man jealous?

Des. I ne'er saw this before.

Sure, there's some wonder in this handkerchief:

I am most unhappy in the loss of it.

Emil. 'Tis not a year or two shows us a man:

⁹ This and the following short speech are omitted in all the ancient editions but the first quarto. The singular phraseology, 'talk me of Cassio,' is illustrated in vol. iii. p. 363, note 1.

They are all but stomachs, and we all but food;
 They eat us hungerly, and when they are full,
 They belch us. Look you! Cassio, and my husband.

Enter IAGO and CASSIO.

Iago. There's is no other way; 'tis she must do't;
 And, lo, the happiness! go, and importune her.

Des. How now, good Cassio? what's the news
 with you?

Cas. Madam, my former suit: I do beseech you,
 That, by your virtuous means, I may again
 Exist, and be a member of his love,
 Whom I, with all the duty¹⁰ of my heart,
 Entirely honour; I would not be delay'd:
 If my offence be of such mortal kind,
 That neither service past, nor present sorrows,
 Nor purpos'd merit in futurity,
 Can ransome me into his love again,
 But to know so must be my benefit¹¹;
 So shall I clothe me in a forc'd content,
 And shut myself up¹² in some other course,
 To fortune's alms.

¹⁰ The folio reads 'the *office* of my heart:' the words were, however, synonymous. Thus Baret:—'*Dutie, office, dutie* of behaviour in honestie and reason: *officium.*' So in Antony and Cleopatra:—

'—— his goodly eyes—now turn
 The *office* and devotion of their view,' &c.

¹¹ 'Si nequeo placidas affari Cæsaris aures,
 Saltem aliquis veniat, qui mihi dicat, abi.'

¹² Here again is a strange discordance of opinion in the commentators on the meaning of *shut myself up*, which evidently signifies no more than '*confine myself.*' One of the old quartos reading '*shoot myself up,*' by mistake, Mason absurdly contends for that reading.—'To fortune's alms' means waiting patiently for whatever bounty fortune, or chance, may bestow upon me. We have the same uncommon phrase in King Lear:—

'————— Let your study
 Be to content your lord, who hath receiv'd you
 At fortune's alms.'

Des. Alas! thrice gentle Cassio,
 My advocacy is not now in tune;
 My lord is not my lord; nor should I know him,
 Were he in favour¹³, as in humour, alter'd.
 So help me, every spirit sanctified,
 As I have spoken for you all my best;
 And stood within the blank¹⁴ of his displeasure,
 For my free speech! You must a while be patient:
 What I can do, I will; and more I will,
 Than for myself I dare: let that suffice you.

Iago. Is my lord angry?

Emil. He went hence but now,
 And, certainly, in strange unquietness.

Iago. Can he be angry? I have seen the cannon,
 When it hath blown his ranks into the air;
 And, like the devil, from his very arm
 Puff'd his own brother;—And can he be angry?
 Something of moment, then: I will go meet him;
 There's matter in't indeed, if he be angry.

Des. I pr'ythee, do so.—Something, sure, of
 state,— [Exit IAGO.
 Either from Venice; or some unhatch'd practice¹⁵,
 Made démonstrable here in Cyprus to him,—
 Hath puddled his clear spirit: and, in such cases,
 Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,
 Though great ones are their object. 'Tis even so:
 For let our finger ache, and it indues¹⁶

¹³ i. e. in countenance. See Act i. Sc. 3, note 53.

¹⁴ To stand *within the blank* is to stand in the *direct range* or in the *immediate course*; to have his displeasure *directed* toward her. See vol. iv. p. 38, note 1.

¹⁵ Some *undeveloped treason*.

¹⁶ I have elsewhere observed that to *indue* was used formerly where we now use to *imbue*. Ophelia, in *Hamlet*, Act iv. Sc. 7, is said to be '*indued* unto that element.' See p. 314, ante.—Malone has well explained the meaning of the passage:—'Let but our finger ache, and this sensation so gets possession of, and

Our other healthful members ev'n to that sense
 Of pain: Nay, we must think, men are not gods;
 Nor of them look for such observances
 As fit the bridal¹⁷.—Beshrew me much, Emilia,
 I was (unhandsome warrior¹⁸ as I am),
 Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;
 But now I find, I had suborn'd the witness,
 And he's indited falsely.

Emil. Pray heaven, it be state matters, as you
 think;

And no conception, nor no jealous toy,
 Concerning you.

Des. Alas, the day! I never gave him cause.

Emil. But jealous souls will not be answer'd so;
 They are not ever jealous for the cause,
 But jealous for they are jealous: 'tis a monster,
 Begot upon itself, born on itself.

Des. Heaven keep that monster from Othello's
 mind!

Emil. Lady, amen.

Des. I will go seek him.—Cassio, walk hereabout:
 If I do find him fit, I'll move your suit,
 And seek to effect it to my uttermost.

Cas. I humbly thank your ladyship.

[*Exeunt DESDEMONA and EMILIA.*]

Enter BIANCA.

Bian. Save you, friend Cassio!

Cas. What make you from home?
 How is it with you, my most fair Bianca?
 I'faith, sweet love, I was coming to your house.

is so infused into the other members, as to make them all participate of the pain.'

' — totumque infusa per artus,

Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.'

¹⁷ i. e. the nuptial feast.

¹⁸ See Act ii. Sc. 1, note 26.

Bian. And I was going to your lodging, Cassio. What! keep a week away? seven days and nights? Eight score eight hours? and lovers' absent hours, More tedious than the dial eight score times? O weary reckoning!

Cas. Pardon me, Bianca;
I have this while with leaden thoughts been press'd;
But I shall, in a more continue time,
Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,
[Giving her *DESDEMONA'S Handkerchief*.
Take me this work out¹⁹.

Bian. O, Cassio, whence came this?
This is some token from a newer friend.
To the felt absence now I feel a cause:
Is it come to this? Well, well.

Cas. Go to! woman,
Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth,
From whence you have them. You are jealous now,
That this is from some mistress, some remembrance:
No, in good troth, Bianca.

Bian. Why, whose is it?

Cas. I know not, sweet: I found it in my chamber.
I like the work well; ere it be demanded,
(As like enough, it will), I'd have it copied:
Take it, and do't; and leave me for this time.

Bian. Leave you! wherefore?

Cas. I do attend here on the general;
And think it no addition, nor my wish,
To have him see me woman'd.

¹⁹ i. e. copy this work in another handkerchief. See Act iii. Sc. 3, note 42. So in Middleton's *Women beware Women*:—

‘ ————— she intends

To take out other works in a new sampler.’

Again in the Preface to Holland's *Pliny*, 1601:—‘*Nicophanes* (a famous painter) gave his mind wholly to antique pictures, partly to exemplify and take out patterns, after that in long continuance of time they were decayed.’

Bian.

Why, I pray you²⁰

Cas. Not that I love you not.

Bian.

But that you do not love me.

I pray you, bring me on the way a little ;

And say, if I shall see you soon at night.

Cas. 'Tis but a little way, that I can bring you,
For I attend here : but I'll see you soon.

Bian. 'Tis very good ; I must be circumstanc'd.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Before the Castle.*

Enter OTHELLO and IAGO.

Iago. Will you think so ?

Oth.

Think so, Iago ?

Iago.

What,

To kiss in private ?

Oth.

An unauthoris'd kiss.

Iago. Or to be naked with her friend abed,
An hour, or more, not meaning any harm ?

Oth. Naked abed, Iago, and not mean harm ?

It is hypocrisy against the devil¹ :

They that mean virtuously, and yet do so,

The devil their virtue tempts², and they tempt heaven.

²⁰ This and the following speech are wanting in the first quarto.

¹ ' We must suppose that Iago had been applying cases of false comfort to Othello ; as that though the parties had been even found in bed together, there might be no harm done : it might be only for trial of their virtue ; as was reported of the Romish saint, Robert D'Arbrissel, and his nuns.' — *Warburton.*

² The *devil tempts their virtue* by stirring up their passions, and they *tempt heaven* by placing themselves in a situation which makes it scarcely possible to avoid falling by the gratification

Iago. So they do nothing, 'tis a venial slip:
But if I give my wife a handkerchief,——

Oth. What then?

Iago. Why then 'tis hers, my lord; and, being hers,
She may, I think, bestow't on any man.

Oth. She is protectress of her honour too;
May she give that?

Iago. Her honour is an essence that's not seen;
They have it very oft, that have it not:
But, for the handkerchief,——

Oth. By heaven, I would most gladly have forgot it:—

Thou said'st,—O, it comes o'er my memory,
As doth the raven o'er the infected house,
Boding to all³,—he had my handkerchief.

Iago. Ay, what of that?

Oth. That's not so good, now.

Iago. What, if I had said, I had seen him do you wrong?

Or heard him say,—As knaves be such abroad,
Who having, by their own importunate suit,
Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,
Convinced or supplied⁴ them, cannot choose
But they must blab——

of them. Perhaps the story of St. Adhelm, related in Bale's *Actes of Englysh Votaries*, is referred to:—'This Adhelmus never refused women, but wold have them commonly both at borde and bedde, to mocke the devyll with,' &c. See also Fabian's *Chronicle*, Part iv. ch. 141.

³ The raven was thought to be a constant attendant on a house infected with the plague.

⁴ i. e. having by their own importunacy overcome the resistance of a mistress, or, in compliance with her own request, and in consequence of her unsolicited fondness, *gratified her desires*. Mariana tells Angelo, in *Measure for Measure*:—

'And did *supply* thee at thy garden house.'

Theobald thought that *supplied* should be *suppled*, i. e. 'made her *pliant* to his desires.'

Oth. Hath he said any thing?

Iago. He hath, my lord; but be you well assur'd,
No more than he'll unswear.

Oth. What hath he said?

Iago. 'Faith, that he did,—I know not what he did.

Oth. What? what?

Iago. Lie——

Oth. With her?

Iago. With her, on her; what you will.

Oth. Lie with her! lie on her!—We say, lie on her, when they belie her: Lie with her! that's fulsome.—Handkerchief,—confessions,—handkerchief.—To confess, and be hanged for his labour⁵.—First to be hanged, and then to confess:—I tremble at it. Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion, without some instruction⁶. It is not words, that shake me thus:—Pish!—

⁵ This proverbial saying is used in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*:

'Blame us not, but the proverb—*Confess and be hanged.*'

And in one of the old collections there is an epigram on it.—All that remains of this speech from *to confess* is wanting in the 4to.

⁶ 'The starts and broken reflections in this speech (says Warburton) have something in them very terrible, and show the mind of the speaker to be in inexpressible agonies.'

There is a difference of opinion between the commentators, some thinking with Warburton that the words, 'Nature would not invest herself in such *shadowing passion*, without some *instruction*,' allude to his own feelings; others that they advert to the story about Cassio's dream, which had been invented and told him by Iago. I must confess that I incline to the latter opinion:—'Nature would not express such *adumbrations of passion* without some *former experience*.' I think this view of the passage confirmed by these words in a former scene:—

'*Iago.* Nay, this was but his dream.

Oth. But this denoted a *foregone conclusion*.'

For (as Sir Joshua Reynolds observes) 'Othello, in broken sentences and single words, all of which have a reference to the cause of his jealousy, shows that all the proofs are present at once to his mind, which so overpower it that he falls into a trance.'

Noses, ears, and lips:—Is it possible?—Confess!
—Handkerchief!—O devil!— [*Falls in a Trance.*]

Iago. Work on;

My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools are
caught;

And many worthy and chaste dames, even thus,
All guiltless meet reproach.—What, ho! my lord!

Enter CASSIO.

My lord, I say! Othello!—How now, Cassio?

Cas. What is the matter?

Iago. My lord is fallen into an epilepsy;
This is his second fit; he had one yesterday.

Cas. Rub him about the temples.

Iago.

No, forbear:

The lethargy must have his quiet course:
If not, he foams at mouth; and, by and by,
Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs:
Do you withdraw yourself a little while,
He will recover straight; when he is gone,
I would on great occasion speak with you.—

[*Exit CASSIO.*]

How is it, general? have you not hurt your head?

Oth. Dost thou mock me?

Iago.

I mock you! no, by heaven:

'Would, you would bear your fortunes like a man.

Oth. A horned man's a monster, and a beast.

Iago. There's many a beast then in a populous city,
And many a civil monster.

Oth. Did he confess it?

Iago.

Good sir, be a man;

Think, every bearded fellow, that's but yok'd,
May draw with you; there's millions now alive,
That nightly lie in those unproper⁷ beds,

⁷ *Unproper* for *common*. So in *The Mastive*, a collection of Epigrams and Satires:—

'Rose is a fayre, but not a proper woman;

Can any creature proper be that's common?

Which they dare swear peculiar; your case is better.
 O, 'tis the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,
 To lip a wanton in a secure couch⁸,
 And to suppose her chaste! No, let me know;
 And, knowing what I am, I know what she shall be.

Oth. O, thou art wise; 'tis certain.

Iago. Stand you awhile apart;
 Confine yourself but in a patient list⁹.
 Whilst you were here, ere while mad¹⁰ with your
 grief

(A passion most unsuiting such a man),
 Cassio came hither: I shifted him away,
 And laid good 'scuse upon your ecstasy;
 Bade him anon return, and here speak with me;
 The which he promis'd. Do but encave¹¹ yourself,
 And mark the fleers, the gibes, and notable scorns,
 That dwell in every region of his face¹²;
 For I will make him tell the tale anew,—
 Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when
 He hath, and is again to cope your wife:
 I say, but mark his gesture. Marry, patience;
 Or I shall say, you are all in all in spleen,
 And nothing of a man.

Oth. Dost thou hear, Iago?
 I will be found most cunning in my patience;
 But (dost thou hear?) most bloody.

Iago. That's not amiss;
 But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw?

[OTHELLO *withdraws*.]

⁸ In a couch in which he is lulled into a false security and confidence in his wife's virtue: a Latin sense. So in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*:—'Though Page be a *secure* fool, and stands so firmly on his wife's frailty,' &c. See vol. vii. p. 421, note 9.

⁹ i. e. within the *bounds* of patience.

¹⁰ The folio reads 'o'erwhelmed with your grief.'

¹¹ *Hide* yourself in a private place.

¹² Congreve might have had this passage in his memory when he made Lady Touchwood say to Maskwell, 'Ten thousand meanings lurk in each corner of that various face.'

Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,
A housewife, that, by selling her desires,
Buys herself bread and clothes: it is a creature,
That dotes on Cassio,—as 'tis the strumpet's plague,
To beguile many, and be beguil'd by one;
He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain
From the excess of laughter!—Here he comes:—

Re-enter CASSIO.

As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad;
And his unbookish¹³ jealousy must construe
Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behaviour
Quite in the wrong.—How do you now, lieutenant?

Cas. The worser, that you give me the addition,
Whose want even kills me.

Iago. Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure of't.
Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's power,

[Speaking lower.

How quickly should you speed?

Cas. Alas, poor caitiff!

Oth. Look, how he laughs already! *[Aside.*

Iago. I never knew a woman love man so.

Cas. Alas, poor rogue! I think i'faith she loves me.

Oth. Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.

[Aside.

Iago. Do you hear, Cassio?

Oth. Now he importunes him
To tell it o'er: Go to; well said, well said. *[Aside.*

Iago. She gives it out, that you shall marry her:
Do you intend it?

Cas. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. Do you triumph, Roman? do you triumph¹⁴?

[Aside.

¹³ *Unbookish* for ignorant.

¹⁴ Othello calls him *Roman* ironically. *Triumph* brought *Roman* into his thoughts. 'What (says he) you are triumphing as great as a Roman?'

Cas. I marry her!—what? a customer¹⁵! I pr'y-thee, bear some charity to my wit; do not think it so unwholesome. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. So, so, so, so: They laugh that win.

[*Aside.*

Iago. 'Faith, the cry goes, that you shall marry her.

Cas. Pr'ythee, say true.

Iago. I am a very villain else.

Oth. Have you scored me¹⁶? Well. [*Aside.*

Cas. This is the monkey's own giving out: she is persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and flattery, not out of my promise.

Oth. Iago beckons me; now he begins the story. [*Aside.*

Cas. She was here even now: she haunts me in every place. I was, the other day, talking on the seabank with certain Venetians; and thither comes this bauble; by this hand¹⁷, she falls thus about my neck;—

Oth. Crying, O dear Cassio! as it were: his gesture imports it. [*Aside.*

Cas. So hangs, and lolls, and weeps upon me; so hales, and pulls me: ha, ha, ha!—

Oth. Now he tells, how she pluck'd him to my chamber: O, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to. [*Aside.*

Cas. Well, I must leave her company.

Iago. Before me! look where she comes.

¹⁵ 'A common woman, with whom any one may be familiar. See vol. iv. p. 182, note 6.

¹⁶ i. e. 'have you *numbered my days*?' To score is to tale or tell, to number, or mark as on a tally. But perhaps it only means, 'have you *marked me*?' as beasts are *scored* or *marked* when purchased for slaughter. The old quarto reads 'have you *stored me*?'

¹⁷ The folio omits 'by this hand;' and reads 'thither comes the bauble and falls me thus,' &c.

Enter BIANCA.

Cas. 'Tis such another fitchew¹⁸! marry, a perfumed one.—What do you mean by this haunting of me?

Bian. Let the devil and his dam haunt you! What did you mean by that same handkerchief; you gave me even now? I was a fine fool to take it. I must take out the whole work?—A likely piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and not know who left it there! This is some minx's token, and I must take out the work! There,—give it your hobby-horse: wheresoever you had it, I'll take out no work on't.

Cas. How now, my sweet Bianca? how now? how now?

Oth. By heaven, that should be my handkerchief.
[*Aside.*

Bian. An you'll come to supper to-night, you may: an you will not, come when you are next prepared for.
[*Exit.*

Iago. After her, after her.

Cas. 'Faith, I must, she'll rail in the street else.

Iago. Will you sup there?

Cas. 'Faith, I intend so.

Iago. Well, I may chance to see you; for I would very fain speak with you.

Cas. Pr'ythee, come; Will you?

Iago. Go to: say no more. [Exit CASSIO.

Oth. How shall I murder him, Iago?

Iago. Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice?

Oth. O, Iago!

¹⁸ Shakspeare has alluded to the lust of this animal in King Lear. He tells Iago that Bianca is as lewd, but of a better scent, the *polecat* being a very stinking animal.

Iago. And did you see the handkerchief?

Oth. Was that mine?

Iago. Yours, by this hand: and to see how he prizes the foolish woman, your wife! she gave it him, and he hath given it his whore.

Oth. I would have him nine years a killing:—A fine woman! a fair woman! a sweet woman!

Iago. Nay, you must forget that.

Oth. Ay, let her rot, and perish, and be damned to-night; for she shall not live: No, my heart is turned to stone; I strike it, and it hurts my hand¹⁹. O, the world hath not a sweeter creature: she might lie by an emperor's side, and command him tasks.

Iago. Nay, that's not your way.

Oth. Hang her! I do but say what she is:—So delicate with her needle!—An admirable musician! O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear²⁰!—Of so high and plenteous wit and invention!—

Iago. She's the worse for all this.

Oth. O, a thousand, a thousand times:—And then, of so gentle a condition!

Iago. Ay, too gentle.

Oth. Nay, that's certain: But yet the pity of it, Iago!—O, Iago, the pity of it, Iago!

Iago. If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend²¹; for, if it touch not you, it comes near nobody.

¹⁹ This thought, which counteracts the pathos, occurs again in Antony and Cleopatra, Act iv. Sc. 8:—

‘ ————— throw my heart

Against the flint and hardness of my fault,
Which being dried with grief will break to powder,
And finish all foul thoughts.’

²⁰ ‘ ————— when she hath sung

The tiger would be tame. *Venus and Adonis.*

²¹ ‘ Why then give sin a passport to offend?’

Tragedy of King Edward III. 1596.

Oth. I will chop her into messes!—Cuckold me!

Iago. O, 'tis foul in her.

Oth. With mine officer!

Iago. That's fouler.

Oth. Get me some poison, Iago; this night:—
I'll not expostulate with her, lest her body and
beauty unprovide my mind again: this night, Iago.

Iago. Do it not with poison; strangle her in her
bed; even the bed she hath contaminated.

Oth. Good, good: the justice of it pleases; very
good.

Iago. And, for Cassio,—let me be his under-
taker: You shall hear more by midnight.

[A Trumpet within.

Oth. Excellent good.—What trumpet is that same:

Iago. Something from Venice, sure. 'Tis Lodo-
vico,

Come from the duke: and, see, your wife is with him.

Enter LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, and Attendants.

Lod. 'Save you, worthy general²²!

Oth. With all my heart, sir.

Lod. The duke and senators of Venice greet you.

[Gives him a Packet.

Oth. I kiss the instrument of their pleasures.

[Opens the Packet and reads.

²² The quarto reads 'God save the worthy general.' Malone says that the reply of Othello does not relate to what Lodovico has just said, but is spoken by Othello while he salutes him. Steevens, on the contrary, thinks that 'The distracted Othello, considering his happiness in this world at an end, readily catches at the idea of future felicity suggested by the words *Save you, general!*' He adds, 'If it be urged that the words only mean *preserve you in this world*, my sense of the passage will not be much weakened; as our protection, even *here*, depends on the Almighty.'—In *Measure for Measure* (Act ii. Sc. 2) two replies of Angelo to similar salutations from Isabel are equally equivocal.

Des. And what's the news, good cousin Lodovico?

Iago. I am very glad to see you, signior;
Welcome to Cyprus.

Lod. I thank you: How does lieutenant Cassio?

Iago. Lives, sir.

Des. Cousin, there's fallen between him and my
lord

An unkind breach: but you shall make all well.

Oth. Are you sure of that?

Des. My lord?

Oth. *This fail you not to do, as you will—*
[*Reads.*

Lod. He did not call; he's busy in the paper.
Is there division 'twixt thy lord and Cassio?

Des. A most unhappy one; I would do much
To atone²³ them, for the love I bear to Cassio.

Oth. Fire and brimstone!

Des. My lord?

Oth. Are you wise?

Des. What, is he angry?

Lod. May be, the letter mov'd him;
For, as I think, they do command him home,
Deputing Cassio in his government.

Des. By my troth, I am glad on't.

Oth. Indeed.

Des. My lord?

Oth. I am glad to see you mad.

Des. How, sweet Othello?

Oth. Devil! [Striking her.

Des. I have not deserv'd this.

Lod. My lord, this would not be believ'd in Venice,
Though I should swear I saw it: 'Tis very much;
Make her amends, she weeps.

Oth. O devil, devil!

²³ i. e. make them one, reconcile them. See vol. iii. p. 211, note 15.

If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile²⁴:—
Out of my sight!

Des. I will not stay to offend you.
[*Going.*

Lod. Truly, an obedient lady:—
I do beseech your lordship, call her back.

Oth. Mistress,——

Des. My lord?

Oth. What would you with her, sir?

Lod. Who, I, my lord?

Oth. Ay; you did wish, that I would make her turn;
Sir, she can turn, and turn²⁵, and yet go on,
And turn again; and she can weep, sir, weep;
And she's obedient, as you say,—obedient,—
Very obedient:—Proceed you in your tears.—
Concerning this, sir,—O well painted passion!
I am commanded home²⁶:—Get you away;
I'll send for you anon.—Sir, I obey the mandate,
And will return to Venice;—Hence, avaunt!

[*Exit* DESDEMONA.

Cassio shall have my place. And,—sir,—to-night,
I do entreat that we may sup together.

²⁴ 'If women's tears could impregnate the earth.' By the doctrine of equivocal generation new animals were supposed producible by new combinations of matter. See Bacon, v. iii. p. 70, edit. 1740. Shakspeare here alludes to the fabulous accounts which make the crocodile the most deceitful of animals, whose tears are proverbially fallacious. 'It is written that he will weep over a man's head when he hath devoured the body, and will then eat up the head too.' Wherefore in Latin there is a proverb, 'Crocodile lachrymæ, crocodiles teares, to signifie such teares as are feigned, and spent only with intent to deceive or do harm.'—*Bullokar's Expositor*, 1616.

To *fall*, in this passage, is a verb active.

²⁵ So in King Henry VI. Part i.:—

'Done like a Frenchman; *turn and turn again.*'

²⁶ The quarto reads, 'I am commanded *here.*'

You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus.—Goats, and monkeys²⁷ ! [Exit.

Lod. Is this the noble Moor whom our full senate
Call—all-in-all sufficient?—This the noble nature
Whom passion could not shake? whose solid virtue
The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,
Could neither graze, nor pierce?

Iago. He is much-chang'd.

Lod. Are his wits safe? is he not light of brain?

Iago. He is that he is; I may not breathe my
censure.

What he might be,—if what he might, he is not,—
I would to heaven, he were.

Lod. What, strike his wife!

Iago. 'Faith, that was not so well; Yet 'would I
knew,

That stroke would prove the worst.

Lod. Is it his use?

Or did the letters work upon his blood,
And new create this fault?

Iago. Alas, alas!

It is not honesty in me, to speak
What I have seen and known. You shall observe him;
And his own courses will denote him so,
That I may save my speech: Do but go after,
And mark how he continues.

Lod. I am sorry, that I am deceiv'd in him.

[Exeunt.

²⁷ In this exclamation Shakspeare has shown great art. Iago in the first scene, in which he endeavours to awaken his suspicion, being urged to give some evident proof of the guilt of Cassio and Desdemona, tells him it were impossible to have ocular demonstration of it, though they should be as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys. These words, we may suppose, still ring in the ears of Othello, who, being now fully convinced of his wife's infidelity, rushes out with this emphatic exclamation: 'Iago's words were but too true; now, indeed, I am convinced that they are as hot as goats and monkeys.'

SCENE II¹. *A Room in the Castle.**Enter OTHELLO and EMILIA.**Oth.* You have seen nothing then?*Emil.* Nor ever heard; nor ever did suspect.*Oth.* Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together.*Emil.* But then I saw no harm: and then I heard
Each syllable that breath made up between them.*Oth.* What, did they never whisper?*Emil.* Never, my lord.*Oth.* Nor send you out o' the way?*Emil.* Never.*Oth.* To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor
nothing?*Emil.* Never, my lord.*Oth.* That's strange.*Emil.* I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,
Lay down my soul at stake: if you think other,
Remove your thought; it doth abuse your bosom.
If any wretch hath put this in your head,
Let heaven requite it with the serpent's curse!
For, if she be not honest, chaste, and true,
There's no man happy; the purest of their wives²
Is foul as slander.

¹ There are great difficulties in ascertaining the place of this scene. What Othello says in an early part of it to Emilia—'Leave procreants alone, and shut the door'—and his subsequent address to her as he goes out, decisively point out a room in Othello's Castle as the place of the scene; and compel us to place the interlocutors there, however inconsistent with Roderigo's entry, and Iago's address to Desdemona, 'Go in and weep not.' The truth is, that our poet and his audience, in this instance, as in many others, were content, from want of scenery, to consider the very same spot, at one and the same time; as the outside and inside of a house. See the *Historical Account of the English Stage*, &c. [Boswell's edition of Malone's *Shakespeare*, vol. iii.]—*Malone*.

² The quarto reads 'of her sex.'

Oth.

Bid her come hither:—go.—

[*Exit EMILIA.*]

She says enough:—yet she's a simple bawd,
That cannot say as much. This is a subtle whore,
A closet-lock-and-key of villanous secrets:
And yet she'll kneel, and pray; I have seen her do't.

*Re-enter EMILIA, with DESDEMONA.**Des.* My lord, what is your will?*Oth.* 'Pray, chuck, come hither.*Des.* What is your pleasure?*Oth.* Let me see your eyes;

Look in my face.

Des. What horrible fancy's this?*Oth.* Some of your function, mistress;[*To EMILIA.*]

Leave procreants alone, and shut the door;
Cough, or cry—hem, if any body come:
Your mystery, your mystery;—nay, despatch.

[*Exit EMILIA.*]*Des.* Upon my knees, what doth your speech import?

I understand a fury in your words,
But not the words³.

Oth. Why, what art thou?

Des. Your wife, my lord; your true
And loyal wife.

Oth. Come, swear it, damn thyself;
Lest, being like one of heav'n, the devils themselves
Should fear to seize thee: therefore be double damn'd,
Swear—thou art honest.

Des. Heaven doth truly know it.*Oth.* Heaven truly knows, that thou art false as hell.*Des.* To whom, my lord? with whom? How am I false?³ This line is not in the folio.

Oth. O Desdemona!—away! away! away!

Des. Alas, the heavy day!—Why do you weep?
Am I the occasion of these tears, my lord?
If, haply, you my father do suspect,
An instrument of this your calling back,
Lay not your blame on me; if you have lost him,
Why, I have lost him too.

Oth. Had it pleas'd heaven
To try me with affliction; had he rain'd
All kinds of sores, and shames, on my bare head;
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips;
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes;
I should have found in some part of my soul
A drop of patience: but (alas!) to make me
A fixed figure, for the time of scorn⁴

⁴ Rowe reads 'the *hand* of scorn,' an elegant and satisfactory emendation; and it is to be wished that there was sufficient authority to admit it into the text. Steevens thinks the old reading right, saying, that Othello takes his idea from a clock: 'To make me (says he) a fixed figure (on the dial of the world) for the hour of scorn to point and make a full stop at!' adducing many similar expressions in defence of it, as 'the *hour* of death,' 'the *day* of judgment,' the *moment* of evil; and in King Richard the Third:—

'Had you such leisure in *the time of death*?'

Also in Marston's *Insatiate Countess*:—

'I'll poison thee; with murder curbe thy paths,
And make thee know a *time of infamy*.'

He afterwards suggests that Shakspeare may have written

'—— for the scorn of time

To point his slow unmoving finger at.'

i. e. the marked object for the contempt of all ages and all time.

The folio reads *and moving* instead of *unmoving*. To me there seems to be no objection in 'slow moving;' about which Malone and Mason make difficulties. The epithet derives support from Shakspeare's 104th Sonnet:—

'Ah! yet doth beauty, like a *dial hand*,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived;
So your sweet hue, which methinks *still doth stand*,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived.'

The *finger* of the dial was the technical phrase. And in *The Comedy of Errors* we have—

'*Time's* deformed [i. e. deforming] hand.'

To point his slow unmoving finger at,—

O! O!

Yet could I bear that too; well, very well:

But there, where I have garner'd⁵ up my heart;

Where either I must live, or bear no life⁶;

The fountain from the which my current runs,

Or else dries up; to be discarded thence!

Or keep it as a cistern, for foul toads

To knot and gender in⁷!—turn thy complexion there!

Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubim;

Ay, there, look grim as hell⁸!

Des. I hope, my noble lord esteems me honest.

Oth. O, ay; as summer flies are in the shambles,
That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed⁹,

Who art so lovely fair, and smell'st so sweet,

That the sense aches at thee.—'Would, thou had'st
ne'er been born!

Des. Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed?

Oth. Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,
Made to write whore upon? What committed¹⁰!

Committed!—O thou public commoner!

I should make very forges of my cheeks,

⁵ i. e. *treasured up*.

⁶ 'Whereby we do exist or cease to be.' *Lear*.

⁷ So in Antony and Cleopatra:—

'So half my Egypt were submerg'd, and made
A cistern for scald'd snakes.'

⁸ 'At such an object do thou, *patience*, thyself *change colour*; at this do thou, even thou, *rosy cherub* as thou art, *look grim as hell*.' The old copies have, 'I *here* look grim as hell.' I was written for *ay*; and *here* was an evident error of the press for *there*. Theobald made the correction.

⁹ The quarto reads:—

'O thou *black weed*, *why art* so lovely fair?

Thou smell'st so sweet, that the sense aches at thee,' &c.

¹⁰ This and the three following lines are not in the first quarto. The peculiar sense in which *committed* is here used may be gathered from King Lear, Act iii. Sc. 14:—'Commit not with man's sworn spouse.' It is so used by many of our old writers, and comes from the transgression, being a violation of the commandment, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.'

That would to cinders burn up modesty,
 Did I but speak thy deeds.—What committed!
 Heaven stops the nose at it, and the moon winks;
 The bawdy wind, that kisses all it meets¹¹,
 Is hush'd within the hollow mine of earth,
 And will not hear it: What committed!—
 Impudent strumpet!

Des. By heaven, you do me wrong.

Oth. Are not you a strumpet?

Des. No, as I am a Christian:
 If to preserve this vessel for my lord¹²,
 From any other foul unlawful touch,
 Be—not to be a strumpet, I am none.

Oth. What, not a whore?

Des. No, as I shall be saved.

Oth. Is it possible?

Des. O, heaven forgive us!

Oth. I cry you mercy, then;
 I took you for that cunning whore of Venice,
 That married with Othello.—You, mistress,

Re-enter EMILIA.

That have the office opposite to Saint Peter,
 And keep the gate of hell; You! you! ay, you!
 We have done our course; there's money for your
 pains;

I pray you, turn the key, and keep our counsel.

[*Exit.*

Emil. Alas, what does this gentleman conceive?—
 How do you, madam? how do you, my good lady?

Des. 'Faith, half asleep.

Emil. Good madam, what's the matter with my lord?

Des. With who?

¹¹ So in *The Merchant of Venice*;

'Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind.'

¹² This expression is from *Sacred Writ*:—'To possess his vessel in sanctification.'

Emil. Why, with my lord, madam.

Des. Who is thy lord¹³?

Emil. He that is yours, sweet lady.

Des. I have none: Do not talk to me, Emilia;
I cannot weep; nor answer I have none,
But what should go by water¹⁴. 'Pr'ythee, to-night
Lay on my bed my wedding sheets,—remember;—
And call thy husband hither.

Emil. Here is a change, indeed! [*Exit.*

Des. 'Tis meet I should be us'd so, very meet.
How have I been behav'd, that he might stick
The small'st opinion on my great'st abuse¹⁵?

Re-enter EMILIA, with IAGO.

Iago. What is your pleasure, madam? How is
it with you?

Des. I cannot tell. Those, that do teach young
babes,
Do it with gentle means, and easy tasks:
He might have chid me so; for, in good faith,
I am a child to chiding.

Iago. What's the matter, lady?

Emil. Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhor'd her,
Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,
As true hearts cannot bear.

Des. Am I that name, Iago?

Iago. What name, fair lady?

Des. Such as, she says, my lord did say I was.

¹³ This and the following speech are not in the quarto.

¹⁴ There are some lines on the death of Queen Elizabeth in Camden, also to be found in Decker's Wonderful Yeare, 1603, which conclude with a similar conceit:—

'I think the barge-men might with easier thighs
Have rowed her thither in her people's eyes:
For how-so-ere, thus much my thoughts have scann'd,
Sh'ad come by water, had she come by land.'

¹⁵ This is the reading of the quarto; which Dr. Johnson thought preferable to the reading of the folio—on my least mis-
use.

Emil. He call'd her, whore; a beggar, in his drink,
Could not have laid such terms upon his callet¹⁶.

Iago. Why did he so?

Des. I do not know; I am sure, I am none such.

Iago. Do not weep, do not weep; Alas, the day!

Emil. Has she forsook so many noble matches,
Her father, and her country, and her friends,
To be call'd—whore? would it not make one weep?

Des. It is my wretched fortune.

Iago. Beshrew him for it!
How comes this trick upon him?

Des. Nay, heaven doth know.

Emil. I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,
Some busy and insinuating rogue,
Some cogging cozening slave, to get some office,
Have not devis'd this slander; I'll be hang'd else.

Iago. Fye, there is no such man; it is impossible.

Des. If any such there be, heaven pardon him!

Emil. A halter pardon him! and hell gnaw his
bones!

Why should he call her, whore? who keeps her
company?

What place? what time? what form? what likeli-
hood?

The Moor's abus'd by some most villanous knave¹⁷,
Some base notorious¹⁸ knave, some scurvy fellow:—
O, heaven, that such companions¹⁹ thoud'st unfold;

¹⁶ A *callet* is a *trull*, a *drab*. The word is of great antiquity in the English language. Chaucer has it in his *Remedy of Love*. Harington uses it in his translation of Ariosto, 1591:—

'And thus this old ill-favour'd spitefull *callet*.'

In a note he says, '*Callet* is a nick-name used to a woman;' and that in Irish it signifies a *witch*. The etymology of the word is yet to seek.

¹⁷ The quarto has, 'some *outrageous* knave.'

¹⁸ Some *notorious* knave is here used for some knave *worthy to be noted*, or branded to everlasting infamy.

¹⁹ It has been already observed that companion was a term of contempt. See vol. viii. p. 255, note 11.

And put in every honest hand a whip,
To lash the rascal naked through the world,
Even from the east to the west!

Iago. Speak within door²⁰.

Emil. O, fye upon him! some such squire he was,
That turn'd your wit the seamy side without²¹,
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.

Iago. You are a fool; go to.

Des. O good Iago,
What shall I do to win my lord again?
Good friend, go to him; for, by this light of heaven,
I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel²²:—
If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
Either in discourse of thought²³, or actual deed;
Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,
Delighted them in any other form;
Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
And ever will,—though he do shake me off
To beggarly divorcement,—love him dearly,
Comfort forswear me! Unkindness may do much;
And his unkindness may defeat my life,
But never taint my love. I cannot say, whore;
It does abhor me, now I speak the word;

²⁰ 'Do not clamour so as to be heard beyond the house.'

²¹ Iago, in a former scene, speaks of Roderigo as of one
'Whom love hath turn'd almost the wrong side outward.'

²² The quarto omits the rest of this speech.

²³ '*Discourse* of thought' is the '*discursive range* of thought.' Pope changed it to '*discourse or thought*.' I have shown in a former page that the old reading is the poet's mode of expression. So in Davies's Epigrams, 'v. *In Plurimos*:'—

'But since the divell brought them thus together,
To my *discoursing thoughts* it is a wonder,
Why presently, as soone as they came thither,
The selfe same divell did them part asunder.'

See Hamlet, p. 174. Steevens thought that Pope's alteration defensible, because the Liturgy mentions three modes of committing sin—'in thought, word, and deed.'

To do the act that might the addition earn,
Not the world's mass of vanity could make me.

Iago. I pray you, be content; 'tis but his humour;
The business of the state does him offence,
And he does chide with you²⁴.

Des. If 'twere no other,—

Iago. It is but so, I warrant you. [*Trumpets.*
Hark, how these instruments summon to supper!
And the great messengers of Venice stay¹⁵:
Go in, and weep not; all things shall be well.

[*Exeunt* DESDEMONA and EMILIA.

Enter RODERIGO.

How now, Roderigo?

Rod. I do not find, that thou deal'st justly with me.

Iago. What in the contrary?

Rod. 'Every day thou doff'st me with some device, Iago; and rather (as it seems to me now), keep'st from me all conveniency, than suppliest me with the least advantage of hope. I will, indeed, no longer endure it: Nor am I yet persuaded, to put up in peace what already I have foolishly suffered.

Iago. Will you hear me, Roderigo?

Rod. 'Faith, I have heard too much; for your words and performances, are no kin together.

Iago. You charge me most unjustly.

Rod. With nought but truth. I have wasted myself out of my means. The jewels you have

²⁴ This was the phraseology of the time. 'To complaine, to make a quarrel, to chide with one for a thing. Expostulare. et queri.' Again:—'Is it best to chide with him or take him up for this displeasure or wrong?'—*Baret*. So Shakspeare's 111th Sonnet:—

'O for my sake do you with fortune chide.'

²⁵ Thus the quarto. The folio poorly reads:—

'The messengers of Venice stay the meat.'

had from me, to deliver to Desdemona, would half have corrupted a votarist: You have told me—she has received them, and returned me expectations and comforts of sudden respect and acquittance²⁶; but I find none.

Iago. Well; go to; very well.

Rod. Very well! go to! I cannot go to, man; nor 'tis not very well: By this hand, I say, it is very scurvy; and begin to find myself fobbed in it.

Iago. Very well.

Rod. I tell you, 'tis not very well. I will make myself known to Desdemona: If she will return me my jewels, I will give over my suit, and repent my unlawful solicitation; if not, assure yourself, I will seek satisfaction of you.

Iago. You have said now.

Rod. Ay, and I have said nothing, but what I protest intendment of doing.

Iago. Why, now I see there's mettle in thee; and even, from this instant, do build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo: Thou hast taken against me a most just exception; but, yet I protest, I have dealt most directly in thy affair.

Rod. It hath not appeared.

Iago. I grant, indeed, it hath not appeared; and your suspicion is not without wit and judgment²⁷. But, Roderigo, if thou hast that within thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever,—I mean, purpose, courage, and valour,—

²⁶ The folio reads *acquaintance*. *Acquittance* is *requital*. So in King Henry V.:

'And shall forge the office of our hand

Sooner than 'quittance of desert and merit,'

²⁷ 'Shakspeare knew well that most men like to be flattered on account of those endowments in which they are most deficient. Hence Iago's compliment to this snipe on his sagacity and shrewdness.'—Malone.

this night show it: if thou the next night following enjoyest not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery, and devise engines for my life²⁸.

Rod. Well, what is it? is it within reason, and compass?

Iago. Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice, to depute Cassio in Othello's place.

Rod. Is that true? why, then Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice.

Iago. O, no; he goes into Mauritania, and takes away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be lingered here by some accident; wherein none can be so determinate, as the removing of Cassio.

Rod. How do you mean—removing of him?

Iago. Why, by making him incapable of Othello's place; knocking out his brains.

Rod. And that you would have me do?

Iago. Ay; if you dare do yourself a profit, and a right. He sups to-night with a harlot²⁹, and thither will I go to him;—he knows not yet of his honourable fortune: if you will watch his going thence (which I will fashion to fall out between twelve and one), you may take him at your pleasure; I will be near to second your attempt, and he shall fall between us. Come, stand not amazed at it, but go along with me; I will show you such a necessity in his death, that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him. It is now high supper-time, and the night grows to waste³⁰: about it.

Rod. I will hear further reason for this.

Iago. And you shall be satisfied. [*Exeunt.*

²⁸ To *devise engines* seems to mean to contrive *instruments of torture*, &c. So in *King Lear*:—

‘—— like an *engine*, wrench'd my frame of nature.'

²⁹ The folio reads '*a harlotry*.' Shakspeare has the expression, '*a peevish self-will'd harlotry*,' in two other plays.

³⁰ i. e. the night is *wasting apace*. So in *Julius Cæsar*:—

'*Sir, March is wasted fourteen days.*'

SCENE III. *Another Room in the Castle.*

Enter OTHELLO, LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, EMILIA, *and* Attendants.

Lod. I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no further.

Oth. O, pardon me; 'twill do me good to walk.

Lod. Madam, good night; I humbly thank your ladyship.

Des. Your honour is most welcome.

Oth. Will you walk, sir?—

O,—Desdemona,—

Des. My lord?

Oth. Get you to bed on the instant, I will be returned forthwith: dismiss your attendant there; look, it be done.

Des. I will, my lord.

[*Exeunt* OTH. LOD. *and* Attendants.]

Emil. How goes it now? he looks gentler than he did.

Des. He says he will return incontinent; He hath commanded me to go to bed, And bade me to dismiss you.

Emil. Dismiss me!

Des. It was his bidding; therefore, good Emilia, Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu: We must not now displease him.

Emil. I would, you had never seen him!

Des. So would not I; my love doth so approve him, That even his stubbornness, his checks, and frowns,—Pr'ythee, unpin me,—have grace and favour in them.

Emil. I have laid those sheets you bade me on the bed.

Des. All's one:—Good father¹! how foolish are our minds!—

¹ The quarto of 1622 reads 'good faith.'

If I do die before thee, 'pr'ythee, shroud me
In one of those same sheets.

Emil. Come, come, you talk.

Des. My mother had a maid call'd—Barbara;
She was in love; and he, she lov'd, prov'd mad²,
And did forsake her: she had a song of—willow,
An old thing 'twas, but it express'd her fortune,
And she died singing it: That song, to-night,
Will not go from my mind; I have much to do³,
But to go hang my head all at one side,
And sing it like poor Barbara. 'Pr'ythee, despatch.

Emil. Shall I go fetch your night-gown?

Des. No, unpin me here.—
This Lodovico is a proper man.

Emil. A very handsome man.

Des. And he speaks well.

Emil. I know a lady in Venice, who would have
walked barefoot to Palestine, for a touch of his
nether lip.

² *Mad* must here be accepted as meaning *wild, unruly, fickle*. As a *constant mind* meant a firm or sound one, *inconstancy* would of course be considered a species of *madness*.

³ From *I have much to do* to *Nay, that's not next* was inserted after the first edition in quarto, 1622, as was likewise the remaining part of the song. Desdemona means to say—I have much *ado to do any thing* but hang my head, &c. 'This (says Dr. Johnson) is perhaps the only insertion made in the latter editions which has improved the play: the rest seem to have been added for the sake of amplification or ornament. When the imagination had subsided, and the mind was no longer agitated by the horror of the action, it became at leisure to look round for specious additions. This addition is natural. Desdemona can at first hardly forbear to sing the song; she endeavours to change her train of thought, but her imagination at last prevails, and she sings it.'—The ballad, in two parts, printed from the original in black letter in the Pepys collection, is to be found in Dr. Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, vol. i. p. 192,

I.

Des. *The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,
Sing all a green willow;* [Singing.

Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,

Sing willow; willow, willow:

*The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd her
moans;*

Sing willow, &c.

Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the stones;

Lay by these:

Sing willow, willow, willow;

'Pr'ythee, hie thee; he'll come anon.—

*Sing all a green willow must be my gar-
land.*

II.

Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve,—

Nay, that's not next.—Hark! who is it that knocks?

Emil. It is the wind.

Des. *I call'd my love, false love; but what said
he then?*

Sing willow, &c.

If I court mo women, you'll couch with mo men⁴.

So, get thee gone; good night. Mine eyes do itch;
Doth that bode weeping?

Emil. 'Tis neither here nor there.

Des. I have heard it said so⁵.—O, these men,
these men!—

⁴ This couplet is not in the original ballad, which is the complaint not of a woman forsaken, but of a man rejected. These lines were properly added when it was accommodated to a woman.

⁵ This as well as the following speech is omitted in the first quarto.

Dost thou in conscience think,—tell me, Emilia,—
That there be women do abuse their husbands
In such gross kind?

Emil. There be some such, no question.

Des. Would'st thou do such a deed for all the
world?

Emil. Why, would not you?

Des. No, by this heavenly light!

Emil. Nor I neither by this heavenly light;
I might do't as well i'the dark.

Des. Would'st thou do such a deed for all the
world?

Emil. The world is a huge thing: 'Tis a great price
For a small vice.

Des. Good troth, I think thou would'st not.

Emil. By my troth, I think I should; and un-
do't, when I had done. Marry, I would not do
such a thing for a joint-ring⁶; nor for measures of
lawn; nor for gowns, petticoats, nor caps, nor any
petty exhibition: but, for the whole world,—Why,
who would not make her husband a cuckold, to
make him a monarch? I should venture purgatory
for't.

Des. Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong
for the whole world.

Emil. Why, the wrong is but a wrong i'the
world; and, having the world for your labour, 'tis
a wrong in your own world, and you might quickly
make it right.

⁶ A *joint-ring* was anciently a common token among lovers
See Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. 1632, 544. Their
nature will be best understood by a passage in Dryden's *Don
Sebastian*:—

‘ ——— a curious artist wrought them,
With *joints* so close as not to be perceiv'd;
Yet are they both each other's counterpart:
————— and, in the midst,
A heart divided in two halves was placed.’

Des. I do not think there is any such woman.

Emil. Yes, a dozen; and as many
To the vantage⁷, as would store the world they
play'd for.

But, I do think, it is their husbands' faults
If wives do fall: Say, that they slack their duties,
And pour our treasures into foreign laps⁸;
Or else break out in peevish jealousies,
Throwing restraint upon us; or, say, they strike us,
Or scant our former having⁹ in despite:
Why, we have galls; and, though we have some
grace,

Yet we have some revenge. Let husbands know,
Their wives have sense¹⁰ like them: they see, and
smell,

And have their palates both for sweet and sour,
As husbands have. What is it that they do,
When they change us for others? Is it sport?
I think it is; And doth affection breed it?
I think, it doth; Is't frailty, that thus errs?
It is so too: And have not we affections?
Desires for sport? and frailty, as men have?
Then, let them use us well: else, let them know,
The ills we do, their ills instruct us to¹¹.

Des. Good night, good night; Heaven me such
usage¹² send,
Not to pick bad from bad; but, by bad, mend!

[*Exeunt.*]

⁷ i. e. to boot, over and above. The remaining part of this speech is omitted in the first quarto.

⁸ So in Shakspeare's 142d Sonnet:—

'Robb'd other beds' revenues of their rents.'

⁹ Our former allowance of expense.

¹⁰ *Sense* is here used, as in *Hamlet*, for *sensation*, or *sensual appetites*. See p. 273, ante.

¹¹ The old copy reads, 'their ills instruct us so.'

¹² 'Such uses' is the reading of the folio; but the first quarto has 'such usage,' which Dr. Johnson prefers, I think, without reason.

ACT V.

SCENE I. *A Street.**Enter IAGO and RODERIGO.*

Iago. Here, stand behind this bulk; straight will he come;

Wear thy good rapier bare, and put it home:
Quick, quick; fear nothing; I'll be at thy elbow:
It makes us, or it mars us; think on that,
And fix most firm thy resolution.

Rod. Be near at hand; I may miscarry in't.

Iago. Here, at thy hand; be bold, and take thy sword. *[Retires to a little distance.]*

Rod. I have no great devotion to the deed;
And yet he has given me satisfying reasons:—
'Tis but a man gone:—forth, my sword; he dies.

[Goes to his stand.]

Iago. I have rubb'd this young quat almost to the sense¹,

And he grows angry. Now, whether he kill Cassio,
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my gain²: Live Roderigo,
He calls me to a restitution large

¹ A *quat*, in the midland counties, is still used for a *pimple*, which by rubbing is made to smart, or *rubbed to sense*. *Roderigo* is called a *quat* by the same mode of speech as a low fellow is now termed in low language a *scab*. *To rub to the sense* is to *rub to the quick*. This explanation by Dr. Johnson had previously appeared in the *British Magazine*, 1748, p. 425. So in *The Devil's Law Case*, 1623:—'O *yong quat!* incontinence is plagued in all the creatures of the world.' The word is also used in *Decker's Gul's Hornbook*.

² The quartos read 'my game.'

Of gold, and jewels, that I bobb'd³ from him,
 As gifts to Desdemona;
 It must not be: if Cassio do remain,
 He hath a daily beauty in his life,
 That makes me ugly; and besides, the Moor
 May unfold me to him; there stand I in much peril:
 No, he must die:—But so, I hear him coming.

Enter CASSIO.

Rod. I know his gait, 'tis he;—Villain, thou diest.

[Rushes from his post, and makes a pass at CASSIO.]

Cas. That thrust had been mine enemy indeed,
 But that my coat is better than thou think'st;
 I will make proof of thine.

[Draws, and wounds RODERIGO.]

Rod. O, I am slain!

[IAGO rushes from his post, cuts CASSIO behind in the Leg⁴, and exit.]

Cas. I am maim'd for ever:—Help, ho! murder! murder!
[Falls.]

Enter OTHELLO, at a distance.

Oth. The voice of Cassio:—Iago keeps his word.

Rod. O, villain that I am!

Oth. Hark! 'tis even so.

Cas. O, help! ho! light! a surgeon!

Oth. 'Tis he;—O brave Iago, honest, and just,

³ 'That I fool'd him out of.' To *bob* is to cheat or deceive with a false tale. So in Turberville's Songs and Sonnets:—

'When wedding day was doon,
 To play her pranks, and *bob* the foole,
 The shrowish wife begoon.'

⁴ Iago maims Cassio in the *leg*, in consequence of what he had just heard him say; from which he supposed that his body was defended by some secret armour.

That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong!
 Thou teachest me,—Minion, your dear lies dead,
 And your fate hies⁵ apace;—Strumpet, I come:
 Forth⁶ of my heart those charms, thine eyes, are
 blotted;
 Thy bed, lust-stain'd, shall with lust's blood be
 spotted. [Exit OTHELLO.

Enter LODOVICO *and* GRATIANO, *at a distance.*

Cas. What, ho! no watch! no passage⁷? murder! murder!

Gra. 'Tis some mischance; the cry is very direful.

Cas. O, help!

Lod. Hark!

Rod. O wretched villain!

Lod. Two or three groans:—it is a heavy⁸ night:
 These may be counterfeits; let's think't unsafe
 To come into the cry, without more help.

Rod. Nobody come? then shall I bleed to death.

⁵ Thus the first quarto. The second quarto and the folio read 'And your *unblest fate hies*.'

⁶ The folio reads '*for of*;' the quarto reads *forth of*, i. e. *out of*. So in King Richard III.:—

'I clothe my naked villany
 With odd ends, stol'n *forth of* holy writ.'

And in Hamlet:—

'*Forth* at your eyes your spirits wildly peep.'

Again in Jonson's Volpone:—

'*Forth* the resolved corners of his eyes.'

⁷ 'No passengers? nobody going by?' So in the Comedy of Errors:—

'Now in the stirring *passage* of the day.'

A *passenger* anciently signified a *passage-boat* or vessel, and could not therefore be used in its modern sense without an equivoque.

⁸ i. e. a *thick cloudy* night.

Enter IAGO, with a Light.

Lod. Hark!

Gra. Here's one comes in his shirt, with light and weapons.

Iago. Who's there? whose noise is this, that cries on murder⁹?

Lod. We do not know.

Iago. Did you not hear a cry?

Cas. Here, here; for heaven's sake, help me.

Iago. What's the matter?

Gra. This is Othello's ancient, as I take it.

Lod. The same, indeed; a very valiant fellow.

Iago. What are you here that cry so grievously?

Cas. Iago? O, I am spoil'd, undone by villains! Give me some help.

Iago. O me, lieutenant! what villains have done this?

Cas. I think, that one of them is hereabout, And cannot make away.

Iago. O treacherous villains!—What are you there? come in, and give some help.

[*To LODOVICO and GRATIANO.*

Rod. O, help me here!

Cas. That's one of them.

Iago. O murderous slave! O villain! [IAGO stabs RODERIGO.

Rod. O damn'd Iago! O inhuman dog!—O! O! O!

Iago. Kill men i'the dark!—Where be these bloody thieves?

How silent is this town!—Ho! murder! murder! What may you be? are you of good, or evil?

Lod. As you shall prove us, praise us.

⁹ This phrase, to cry on, for cry out on, has already occurred in Hamlet, Act v. Sc. 2. See p. 347, ante.

Iago. Signior Lodovico?

Lod. He, sir.

Iago. I cry you mercy ; Here's Cassio hurt
By villains.

Gra. Cassio?

Iago. How is it, brother?

Cas. My leg is cut in two.

Iago. Marry, heaven forbid!—
Light, gentlemen ; I'll bind it with my shirt.

Enter BIANCA.

Bian. What is the matter, ho? who is't that cry'd?

Iago. Who is't that cry'd?

Bian. O my dear Cassio! my sweet Cassio!
O Cassio! Cassio! Cassio!

Iago. O notable strumpet!—Cassio, may you
suspect
Who they should be, that have thus mangled you?

Cas. No.

Gra. I am sorry, to find you thus: I have been
to seek you.

Iago. Lend me a garter¹⁰: So.—O, for a chair,
To bear him easily hence!

Bian. Alas, he faints:—O Cassio! Cassio! Cassio!

Iago. Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash
To be a party in this injury¹¹.

Patience awhile, good Cassio.—Come, come;

Lend me a light.—Know we this face, or no?

Alas! my friend, and my dear countryman¹²,
Roderigo? no:—Yes, sure; O heaven! Roderigo.

Gra. What, of Venice?

¹⁰ This speech is not in the first quarto.

¹¹ Thus the folio. The quarto 1622 reads—to bear a part in this.

¹² This passage incontestably proves that Iago was meant for a Venetian.

Iago. Even he, sir; did you know him?

Gra. Know him, ay.

Iago. Signior Gratiano? I cry you gentle pardon;
These bloody accidents must excuse my manners,
That so neglected you.

Gra. I am glad to see you.

Iago. How do you, Cassio?—O, a chair, a chair!

Gra. Roderigo?

Iago. He, he, 'tis he:—O, that's well said;—the
chair:— [A Chair brought in.

Some good man bear him carefully from hence;
I'll fetch the general's surgeon.—For you, mistress,
[To BIANCA.

Save you your labour. He that lies slain here,
Cassio,

Was my dear friend: What malice was between you?

Cas. None in the world; nor do I know the man.

Iago. [To BIAN.] What, look you pale?—O,
bear him out o'the air.—

[CASSIO and ROD. are borne off.

Stay you, good gentlemen¹³:—Look you pale, mis-
tress?

Do you perceive the gastness of her eye¹⁴?—

Nay, if you stare, we shall hear more anon:—

Behold her well; I pray you, look upon her;

Do you see, gentlemen? nay, guiltiness will speak,
Though tongues were out of use¹⁵.

¹³ Thus the folio. The quarto reads—Stay you, good *gentlewoman*. It seems probable that Iago addresses Lodovico and Gratiano, who are going away to assist Cassio, and to see him properly taken care of. The subsequent appeal and address of Iago to them appears to confirm this supposition. Malone follows the quarto, and defends the reading of it.

¹⁴ The quarto, instead of *gastness*, reads *jestures*, and instead of *stare*, in the next line, has *stirre*.

¹⁵ So in Hamlet:—

'For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak,
With most miraculous organ.'

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. 'Las, what's the matter; what's the matter, husband?

Iago. Cassio hath here been set on in the dark, By Roderigo, and fellows that are 'scap'd; He's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.

Emil. Alas, good gentleman! alas, good Cassio!

Iago. This is the fruit of whoring.—'Pr'ythee, Emilia,

Go know of Cassio where he supp'd to-night¹⁶:— What, do you shake at that?

Bian. He supp'd at my house; but I therefore shake not.

Iago. O, did he so? I charge you, go with me.

Emil. Fye, fye upon thee, strumpet!

Bian. I am no strumpet; but of life as honest, As you that thus abuse me.

Emil. As I? foh! fye upon thee!

Iago. Kind gentlemen, let's go see poor Cassio dress'd:—

Come, mistress, you must tell us another tale.—

Emilia, run you to the citadel,

¹⁶ In the second scene of the preceding act Iago informs Roderigo that Cassio was to sup with Bianca; that he would go to him there, and bring him away between twelve and one. Indeed Cassio had himself told Iago that he would sup with Bianca, and Iago had promised to meet him at her house. We must suppose, therefore, that this consummate villain thought it more secure to waylay him, as we find he does, without actually joining him at suppertime. Otherwise Bianca would surely have answered:—

'Why, you well know
He supp'd,' &c.

Steevens suggests that as the former line is imperfect, some such words may have been accidentally omitted. His other supposition, 'perhaps the poet was unwilling that Bianca should say, in the presence of Iago's wife, that he too had been of the supper party,' is much less probable.

And tell my lord and lady what has happ'd.—
 Will you go on, I pray;—This is the night, [*Aside.*
 That either makes me, or fordoes¹⁷ me quite.
 [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Bedchamber: DESDEMONA in
 Bed asleep. A Light burning.*

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul,
 Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars¹!—
 It is the cause.—Yet I'll not shed her blood;
 Nor scar that whiter skin of her's than snow,
 And smooth as monumental alabaster.

[*Takes off his sword.*

Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.
 Put out the light, and then—Put out the light²!

¹⁷ To *fordo* is to *undo*, to *ruin*, to *destroy*. So in *Hamlet*:—
 ' ——— Did with desperate hand
Fordo its own life.'

¹ Othello, full of horror at the cruel action which he is about to perpetrate, seems at this instant to be seeking his justification, from representing to himself *the cause*, i. e. the greatness of the provocation he had received.

² The old copy gives this line thus:—

' Put out the light, and then put out the light.'

The present regulation of the passage, by which so much beauty and spirit is added to it, was proposed by Mr. Upton, but it is to be found in Ayres's *Life of Pope*; it may therefore have originated with Warburton, who thus explains it:—'The meaning is, I will put out the light, and *then* proceed to the execution of my purpose. But the expression of *putting out the light*, bringing to mind the effects of the extinction of the light of life, he breaks short, and questions himself about the effects of this metaphorical extinction, introduced by a repetition of his first words, as much as to say,—But hold, let me first weigh the reflection which this expression naturally excites.' Dr. Farmer treats this as a refinement of Warburton's, observing that to *put out the light* was a phrase for *to kill*. Malone stoutly combats on the same side, but his arguments have not convinced me, and I have therefore followed Warburton's arrangement. Mr. Boswell

If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
 I can again thy former light restore,
 Should I repent me:—but once put out thine³,
 Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,
 I know not where is that Promethean heat,
 That can thy light relume⁴. When I have pluck'd
 thy rose,

I cannot give it vital growth again,
 It needs must wither:—I'll smell it on the tree.—

[*Kissing her.*]

O balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
 Justice to break her sword!—One more, one more.—
 Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,
 And love thee after:—One more, and this the last:
 So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,
 But they are cruel tears; This sorrow's heavenly;
 It strikes, where it doth love⁵.—She wakes—

Des. Who's there? Othello?

Oth.

Ay, Desdemona.

Des. Will you come to bed, my lord?

Oth. Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona?

would have done so if he could have used his own discretion.
⁴ I have felt bound (says he) to print the text according to Mr. Malone's opinion; but if Warburton's explanation be an error, it is *demptus per vim*, I for one am very sorry to part with it. Broken sentences, as Mr. Malone has more than once observed, are very much in our poet's manner, and are surely natural in the perturbed state of Othello's mind. I am unwilling to persuade myself that a regulation of the text which contains so much beauty could be merely the refinement of a critic, and that our great author, in one of his most highly-wrought scenes, instead of it, intended nothing but a cold conceit.

³ Thus the quarto. The folio reads—put out *thy light*. Steevens adopted the present reading for the sake of the measure, and to avoid the useless repetition of the word *light*.

⁴ Thus the folio. The first quarto—*returne*: the second quarto—*relumine*.

⁵ This image seems to be derived from Scripture:—'Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth.'

Des.

Ay, my lord.

Oth. If you bethink yourself of any crime,
Unreconcil'd as yet to heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight.

Des. Alas, my lord, what may you mean by that?

Oth. Well, do it, and be brief; I will walk by:
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit;
No,—Heaven forfend!—I would not kill thy soul⁶.

Des. Talk you of killing?

Oth.

Ay, I do.

Des.

Then, heaven

Have mercy on me!

Oth.

Amen, with all my heart!

Des. If you say so, I hope you will not kill me.

Oth. Humph!

Des. And yet I fear you: for you are fatal then,
When your eyes roll so: Why I should fear, I
know not,

Since guiltiness I know not; but yet I feel, I fear.

Oth. Think on thy sins.

Des.

They are loves I bear to you.

Oth. Ay, and for that thou diest.

Des. That death's unnatural, that kills for loving⁷.—
Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip?
Some bloody passion shakes your very frame:

⁶ Davenant has borrowed this thought in his *Law of Lombardy*:—

‘I am not fraught with the devil’s spleen; I would
not hurt *thy soul*.’

Othello seems to have been a favourite of his author; for he has bestowed on him that piety he has refused to Hamlet. See p. 268, ante.—*Steevens*.

⁷ This thought is likewise found in *The Legend of Orpheus and Euridice*, by H. L. 1597:—

‘Unnatural that kill where you should kiss.’

And in *King Richard III.*:—

‘It is a quarrel most unnatural,
To be reveng’d on him that loveth thee.’

These are portents; but yet, I hope, I hope,
They do not point on me.

Oth. Peace, and be still!

Des. I will so: What's the matter?

Oth. That handkerchief, which I so lov'd, and
gave thee,
Thou gav'st to Cassio.

Des. No, by my life and soul;
Send for the man, and ask him.

Oth. Sweet soul, take heed,
Take heed of perjury; thou'rt on thy death-bed.

Des. Ay, but not yet to die.

Oth. Yes, presently:
Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin;
For to deny each article with oath,
Cannot remove, nor choke the strong conception,
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.

Des. Then, Lord have mercy on me!

Oth. I say, amen.

Des. And have you mercy too! I never did
Offend you in my life; never lov'd Cassio,
But with such general warranty of heaven
As I might love: I never gave him token.

Oth. By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in his
hand.

O perjur'd woman! thou dost stone my heart,
And mak'st me call, what I intend to do,—
(A murder which I thought,)—a sacrifice⁸:
I saw the handkerchief.

⁸ 'This line is difficult. *Thou hast hardened my heart, and makest me* kill thee with the rage of a murderer, when *I thought to have sacrificed thee* to justice with the calmness of a priest striking a victim.'—*Johnson*. There is a second attempt at explanation by *Johnson*, adopting the reading of one of the quartos—'thou dost stone *thy* heart,' still less successful than the above. The obvious sense of the passage is—'Thou dost *harden* my heart, and mak'st me *now* call what I intend to do,—and

Des. He found it then ;
I never gave it him :—Send for him hither,
And let him confess a truth.

Oth. He hath confess'd.

Des. What, my lord ?

Oth. That he hath—us'd thee⁹.

Des. How ? unlawfully ?

Oth. Ay.

Des. He'll not say so.

Oth. No, his mouth is stopp'd ;
Honest Iago hath ta'en order for't.

Des. My fear interprets then,—What, is he dead ?

Oth. Had all his hairs been lives¹⁰, my great
revenge
Had stomach for them all.

Des. Alas ! he is betray'd, and I undone.

Oth. Out, strumpet ! Weep'st thou for him to
my face ?

Des. O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not.

Oth. Down, strumpet !

Des. Kill me to-morrow, let me live to-night.

Oth. Nay, if you strive,—

which I *before* thought murder,—a sacrifice *only*.' The difficulty consists in the inverted phrase—' a murder which I thought'—being parenthetical. The passage has been hitherto absurdly pointed. Johnson exclaims—' I am glad that I have ended this dreadful scene. It is not to be endured.'

⁹ The quarto 1622 reads :—

' That he hath.—uds death.'

¹⁰ This thought appears to have been common :—

' Know, Cæsar, had I now as many lives

As there are stones, or *hairs* upon my head,

I would,' &c.

The Devil's Charter, 1607.

Again in Beaumont and Fletcher's *King and No King*, produced in 1611 :—

' ——— but if all

My hairs were lives, I would be engaged

In such a cause.'

Des. But half an hour.

Oth. Being done,

There is no pause¹¹.

Des. But while I say one prayer.

Oth. It is too late¹². [*He smothered her.*]

Emil. [*Within.*] My lord, my lord! what ho!
my lord! my lord!

Oth. What noise is this?—Not dead! not yet
quite dead?

I; that am cruel, am yet merciful;

I would not have thee linger in thy pain.—

So, so¹³.

Emil. [*Within.*] What ho! my lord, my lord!

Oth. Who's there?

Emil. [*Within.*] O, good my lord, I would speak
a word with you.

Oth. Yes;—'tis Emilia:—by and by.—She's
dead.

'Tis like she comes to speak of Cassio's death:

The noise was high.—Ha! no more moving?

Still as the grave. Shall she come in? Were't good?

I think, she stirs again:—No.—What's the best?

If she come in, she'll sure speak to my wife:

My wife! my wife! what wife?—I have no wife¹⁴:

¹¹ The first quarto omits this speech.

¹² After this speech of Othello, the elder quarto adds an invocation from Desdemona, consisting only of the sacred name thrice repeated. The statute of the 3d of James I. c. 21, against the profane use of the name of God, &c. was highly necessary, for many of the old plays abounded in the most wanton and shocking profanations of a name which never ought to be mentioned in such an irreverend manner on the stage.

¹³ It is supposed that some theatrical direction has been omitted, and that, when Othello says, 'So, so,' he then stabs her. After the repetition of wounds, Desdemona might speak again with propriety, and yet very soon expire.

¹⁴ — Filium unicum adolescentulum

Habeo: ah! quid dixi habere me? imò habui, Chreme.'

Terent. Hæmulus.

O insupportable! O heavy hour¹⁵!
 Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse
 Of sun and moon; and that the affrighted globe
 Should yawn at alteration.

Emil. [*Within.*] I do beseech you I may speak
 with you,
 O, good my lord!

Oth. I had forgot thee: O, come in, Emilia:—
 Soft,—by and by:—Let me the curtains draw.—
 Where art thou? What's the matter with thee now?
 [*Unlocks the door.*]

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. O, good my lord, yonder's foul murderdone.

Oth. What? now?

Emil. But now, my lord!

Oth. It is the very error of the moon;
 She comes more near the earth than she was wont;
 And makes men mad¹⁶.

Emil. Cassio, my lord, has kill'd a young Venetian,
 Call'd—Roderigo.

Oth. Roderigo kill'd!
 And Cassio kill'd?

Emil. No, Cassio is not kill'd.

Oth. Not Cassio kill'd? Then murder's out of tune,
 And sweet revenge grows harsh.

Des. O, falsely, falsely murder'd!

Emil. Alas! what cry is that?

Oth. That! what?

Emil. Out, and alas! that was my lady's voice:—

¹⁵ Steevens seems to think the use of the epithet *heavy* hour here unusual. Surely there is nothing more common. *Heavy*, *sad*, and *grievous* are synonymous with all our old writers.

¹⁶ 'On my fayth I thynke the moone be at the full,
 For frantyeke fansyes be then most plenteful.'

The Play of the Wether, by John Heywood.

Help! help, ho! help!—O lady, speak again!
Sweet Desdemona! O, sweet mistress, speak!

Des. A guiltless death I die.

Emil. O, who hath done
This deed?

Des. Nobody; I myself; farewell:
Commend me to my kind lord; O, farewell. [*Dies.*

Oth. Why, how should she be murder'd?

Emil. Alas, who knows?

Oth. You heard her say herself, it was not I.

Emil. She said so; I must needs report the truth.

Oth. She's, like a liar, gone to burning hell;
'Twas I that kill'd her.

Emil. O, the more angel she,
And you the blacker devil!

Oth. She turn'd to folly¹⁷, and she was a whore.

Emil. Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.

Oth. She was false as water¹⁸.

Emil. Thou art rash as fire, to say
That she was false; O, she was heavenly true!

Oth. Cassio did tup her; ask thy husband else.
O, I were damn'd beneath all depth in hell,
But that I did proceed upon just grounds
To this extremity; Thy husband knew it all.

Emil. My husband?

Oth. Thy husband.

Emil. That she was false to wedlock?

Oth. Ay, with Cassio.
Nay, had she been true,
If heaven would make me such another world

¹⁷ *Folly* signifies here, as in the sacred writings, wantonness, unchastity. See Deuteronomy, xxii. 21. So in the Rape of Lucrece:—

‘Her sad behaviour feeds his vulture *folly*.’

¹⁸ i. e. as *unstable*, as deceitful. In Genesis, xlix. Jacob applies a similar term to Reuben:—‘Thou wast light as water.’

Of one entire and perfect chrysolite¹⁹,
I'd not have sold her for it.

Emil. My husband?

Oth. Ay, 'twas he that told me first²⁰;
An honest man he is, and hates the slime
That sticks on filthy deeds.

Emil. My husband?

Oth. What needs this iterance²¹, woman? I say,
thy husband.

Emil. O mistress, villany hath made mocks with
love²²!—

My husband say, that she was false?

Oth. He, woman.

I say, thy husband: Dost understand the word?
My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.

Emil. If he say so, may his pernicious soul
Rot half a grain a day! he lies to the heart;
She was too fond of her most filthy bargain.

Oth. Ha!

Emil. Do thy worst:
This deed of thine is no more worthy heaven,
Than thou wast worthy her.

Oth. Peace, you were best.

Emil. Thou hast not half the power to do me harm,
As I have to be hurt²³. O gull! O dolt!

¹⁹ Pliny informs us that Ptolemy Philadelphus had a statue of his wife Arsinoe, made of one *topaz*, four cubits in length.—*Hist. Nat.* b. xxxvii. c. 8. Dr. Clarke, in his *Lectures on Mineralogy*, says he used *topaz* and *chrysolite* as synonymous terms. Perhaps Shakspeare alludes to this story.—*Plumptre*.

²⁰ The folio reads—that told me *on her* first.

²¹ The quarto reads—*iteration*. The two next speeches are omitted in that copy.

²² Villany hath taken advantage to *play upon* the weakness of a violent passion.

²³ 'More can I bear than you dare execute.'

This line, from the Second Part of King Henry VI. is one of those attributable to Shakspeare, and explains Emilia's sentiment. There is a similar idea in King Henry VIII. Act iii. Sc. 2, p. 258.

As ignorant as dirt! thou hast done a deed,—
 I care not for thy sword; I'll make thee known,
 Though I lost twenty lives:—Help! help, ho! help!
 The Moor has kill'd my mistress: Murder! murder!

Enter MONTANO, GRATIANO, *and* IAGO.

Mon. What is the matter?—How now, general?

Emil. O, are you come, Iago? you have done well,
 That men must lay their murders on your neck.

Gra. What is the matter?

Emil. Disprove this villain, if thou beest a man:
 He says, thou told'st him that his wife was false:
 I know, thou didst not, thou'rt not such a villain;
 Speak, for my heart is full.

Iago. I told him what I thought; and told no
 more
 Than what he found himself was apt and true.

Emil. But did you ever tell him, she was false?

Iago. I did.

Emil. You told a lie; an odious damned lie;
 Upon my soul, a lie; a wicked lie:—
 She false with Cassio!—Did you say with Cassio?

Iago. With Cassio, mistress; Go to, charm your
 tongue²⁴.

Emil. I will not charm my tongue; I am bound
 to speak;
 My mistress here lies murder'd in her bed²⁵.

²⁴ See vol. vi. p. 313, note 10. To *charm* is to conjure, to enchant, to *lay* or *still* as with a *charm*. So in King Henry V.:—

‘ ——— Charming the narrow seas

To give you gentle pass.’

Pliny informs us that *favete linguis* was the constant exclamation before any *charm* was applied. From this circumstance the phrase to *charm* a tongue, may have originated. So in The Tempest:—

‘ Hush, be mute,

Or else our spell is marr'd.’

²⁵ This line, and the six following speeches, are wanting in the first quarto.

All. O heavens forefend !

Emil. And your reports have set the murder on.

Oth. Nay, stare not, masters ; it is true, indeed.

Gra. 'Tis a strange truth.

Mon. O monstrous act !

Emil. Villany, villany, villany !—
I think upon't,—I think,—I smell't ;—O villany !
I thought so then ²⁶ ;—I'll kill myself for grief.—
O villany, villany !

Iago. What, are you mad ? I charge you, get you home.

Emil. Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak ;
'Tis proper I obey him, but not now :—
Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home.

Oth. O ! O ! O ! [*Hanging over his wife.*

Emil. Nay, lay thee down, and roar ;
For thou hast kill'd the sweetest innocent,
That e'er did lift up eye.

Oth. O, she was foul !— [*Rising.*
I scarce did know you, uncle : There lies your niece,
Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly
stopp'd :

I know, this act shows horrible and grim.

Gra. Poor Desdemona ! I am glad thy father's
dead ;

Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief
Shore his old thread in twain : did he live now,
This sight would make him do a desperate turn,
Yea, curse his better angel from his side ²⁷,
And fall to reprobation ²⁸.

²⁶ That is, at the instant when she gave Desdemona's handkerchief to Iago : for even *then* Emilia appears to have suspected it was sought after for no honest purpose, and therefore asks her husband—'What will you do with it?' &c. See Act iii. Sc. 2.

²⁷ So in Shakspeare's 144th Sonnet :—

' ————— My female evil

Tempteth my better angel from my side.

²⁸ The first and the second folio both read—reprobance.

Oth. 'Tis pitiful : but yet Iago knows,
That she with Cassio hath the act of shame
A thousand times committed²⁹; Cassio confess'd it :
And she did gratify his amorous works
With that recognizance and pledge of love
Which I first gave her ; I saw it in his hand ;
It was a handkerchief, an antique token
My father gave my mother³⁰.

Emil. O heaven ! O heavenly powers !

Iago. Come, hold your peace.

Emil. 'Twill out, 'twill out ;—I hold my peace,
sir ? no ;

²⁹ Dr. Johnson thinks that this and other passages in the play seem to suppose a longer space comprised in the action of this play than the scene includes. Mr. Tollet has adduced several instances in support of this opinion, as that in Act iii. Sc. 3 :—

' I slept the next night well, was free and merry,
I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips.'

' On Othello's wedding night, he and Cassio embarked from Venice, where Desdemona was left under the care of Iago. They all met at Cyprus ; and since their arrival there, the scenes include only one night, the night of the celebration of their nuptials.—What night was there to intervene between Cassio's kisses and Othello's sleeping the next night well ? Iago has said, " I lay with Cassio lately," which he could not well have done, unless they had been longer at Cyprus than ~~is~~ represented in the play ; nor could Cassio have kept away for the space of a whole week from Bianca.' Steevens obviates one objection, by supposing that what Othello mentions might have passed before he was married to Desdemona, when Cassio went between them, and that a *thousand* times is only an aggravated term for many times. The difficulties started by Mr. Tollet he is unable to explain.

³⁰ Othello tells his wife, Act iii. Sc. 4 :—

' ——— That handkerchief
Did an Egyptian to my mother give.'

This passage, therefore, has been censured as an oversight in the poet ; but perhaps it exhibits only a fresh proof of his art. The first account of the handkerchief, as given by Othello, was purposely ostentatious, in order to alarm his wife the more. When he mentions it a second time, the truth was sufficient for his purpose.—*Steevens.*

No, I will speak as liberal³¹ as the air;
 Let heaven, and men, and devils, let them all,
 All, all, cry shame against me, yet I'll speak.

Iago. Be wise, and get you home.

Emil.

I will not.

[*IAGO offers to stab his Wife.*

Gra.

Fye!

Your sword upon a woman?

Emil. O thou dull Moor! that handkerchief thou
 speak'st of,
 I found by fortune, and did give my husband;
 For often, with a solemn earnestness
 (More than, indeed, belong'd to such a trifle),
 He begg'd of me to steal it.

Iago. Villanous whore!

Emil. She give it Cassio! no, alas; I found it,
 And I did give't my husband.

Iago.

Filth, thou liest.

Emil. By heaven, I do not; I do not, gentlemen:
 O murd'rous coxcomb! what should such a fool
 Do with so good a wife?

[*IAGO stabs EMILIA, then runs out.*

Oth. Are there no stones in heaven,
 But what serve for the thunder³²?—Precious villain?

Gra. The woman falls; sure, he has kill'd his wife.

Emil. Ay, ay; O, lay me by my mistress' side!

Gra. He's gone, but his wife's kill'd.

Mon. 'Tis a notorious villain. Take you this
 weapon,

³¹ The folio reads—

'I'll be in speaking liberal as the north.'

The quarto 1622—'liberal as the air.' The text is formed out of the two copies. *Liberal* here means *free*. So in Jeronimo, i. e. the first part of The Spanish Tragedy, 1605:—

'Now let your bloods be *liberal* as the sea.'

³² The meaning appears to be:—'Has not heaven one super-numerary bolt, to hurl directly at the head of this atrocious villain?'

Which I have here recover'd from the Moor:
Come, guard the door without: let him not pass,
But kill him rather; I'll after that same villain,
For 'tis a damned slave.

[*Exeunt* MONTANO and GRATIANO.

Oth. I am not valiant neither,
But every puny whipster gets my sword:—
But why should honour outlive honesty?
Let it go all.

Emil. What did thy song bode, lady?
Hark, canst thou hear me? I will play the swan,
And die in musick³³;—*Willow, willow, willow.*—
Moor, she was chaste; she lov'd thee, cruel Moor;
So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true;
So speaking as I think, I die,—I die. [*Dies.*

Oth. I have another weapon in this chamber,
It is a sword of Spain, the ice-brook's temper³⁴;
O, here it is:—Uncle, I must come forth.

Gra. [*Within.*] If thou attempt it, it will cost
thee dear;

Thou hast no weapon, and perforce must suffer.

Oth. Look in upon me then, and speak with me,
Or, naked as I am, I will assault thee.

Re-enter GRATIANO.

Gra. What is the matter?

Oth. Behold! I have a weapon;

³³ So in *The Merchant of Venice*:—

'—— he makes a swanlike end,
Fading in musick.'

³⁴ The particular name of the ice-brook may be determined from several passages in *Martial*. (See lib. i. ep. 50, lib. iv. ep. 55.) It was undoubtedly the brook or rivulet called *Salo* (now *Xalon*) near *Bilbilis* in *Celtiberia*. In this the Spaniards plunged all their swords and other weapons while hot from the forge; and to the icy quality of the waters they were supposed to be indebted for their stubborn temper. See also *Justin*, i. 44. It should be remembered that Spain was famous for producing the best sword blades.

A better never did itself sustain
 Upon a soldier's thigh : I have seen the day,
 That, with this little arm, and this good sword,
 I have made my way through more impediments
 Than twenty times your stop³⁵ :—But, O vain boast!
 Who can control his fate ? 'tis not so now.—
 Be not afraid, though you do see me weapon'd;
 Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,
 And very seamark of my utmost sail.
 Do you go back dismay'd ? 'tis a lost fear ;
 Man but a rush against Othello's breast,
 And he retires ;—Where should Othello go ?—
 Now, how dost thou look now ? O ill-starr'd wench³⁶ !
 Pale as thy smock ! when we shall meet at compt,
 This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven,
 And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl ?
 Even like thy chastity.—
 O cursed, cursed slave !—Whip me, ye devils,
 From the possession of this heavenly sight !
 Blow me about in winds ! roast me in sulphur !
 Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire !—
 O Desdemona ! Desdemona ! dead ?
 Dead ? O ! O ! O !

Enter LODOVICO, MONTANO, CASSIO, *carried in*
a Chair, and Officers, with IAGO, *prisoner.*

Lod. Where is this rash and most unfortunate man ?

Oth. That's he, that was Othello ; here I am.

Lod. Where is that viper ? bring the villain forth.

³⁵ Thus in *Coriolanus*, Sc. 1 :—

‘ ——— Cracking ten thousand curbs
 Of more strong link asunder, than can ever
 Appear in your impediment.’

³⁶ This and the six preceding lines are omitted in the first quarto. *Wench* originally signified only a *girl* or *young woman*. It is so used in our old version of the Scriptures, and by many of our early writers.

Oth. I look down towards his feet³⁷—but that's a fable ;

If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.

[*OTHELLO wounds IAGO.*

Lod. Wrench his sword from him.

Iago. I bleed, sir ; but not kill'd.

Oth. I am not sorry neither ; I'd have thee live ;
For, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die³⁸.

Lod. O thou Othello, that was once so good,
Fall'n in the practice³⁹ of a cursed slave,
What shall be said to thee ?

Oth. Why, any thing :
An honourable murderer, if you will ;
For nought I did in hate, but all in honour.

Lod. This wretch hath part confess'd his villany :
Did you and he consent in Cassio's death ?

Oth. Ay.

Cas. Dear general, I never gave you cause.

Oth. I do believe it, and I ask your pardon.
Will you, I pray you, demand that demi-devil,
Why he hath thus ensnar'd my soul and body ?

Iago. Demand me nothing : What you know, you
know :

From this time forth I never will speak word.

Lod. What ? not to pray ?

Gra. Torments will ope your lips.

Oth. Well, thou dost best.

Lod. Sir, you shall understand what hath befall'n,
Which, as I think, you know not : Here is a letter,
Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo ;
And here, another : the one of them imports

³⁷ To see if, according to the common opinion, his feet be cloven.

³⁸ The same thought occurs in Antony and Cleopatra :—

' 'Tis well thou'rt gone,

If it be well to live.'

³⁹ In the snare, by the stratagem.

The death of Cassio to be undertook
By Roderigo.

Oth. O villain!

Cas. Most heathenish, and most gross!

Lod. Now here's another discontented paper,
Found in his pocket too: and this, it seems,
Roderigo meant to have sent this damned villain;
But that, belike, Iago, in the interim⁴⁰,
Came in and satisfied him.

Oth. O the pernicious caitiff?—
How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief
That was my wife's?

Cas. I found it in my chamber:
And he himself confess'd, but even now,
That there he dropp'd it, for a special purpose,
Which wrought to his desire.

Oth. O fool! fool! fool!

Cas. There is, besides, in Roderigo's letter,—
How he upbraids Iago, that he made him
Brave me upon the watch; whereon it came
That I was cast; And even but now he spake,
After long seeming dead,—Iago hurt him,
Iago set him on.

Lod. You must forsake this room, and go with us;
Your power and your command is taken off,
And Cassio rules in Cyprus. For this slave,—
If there be any cunning cruelty,
That can torment him much, and hold him long,
It shall be his: You shall close prisoner rest,
Till that the nature of your fault be known
To the Venetian state:—Come, bring him away.

Oth. Soft you; a word or two, before you go.
I have done the state some service, and they know it;
No more of that;—I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,

⁴⁰ The first quarto reads—'in the nick.'

Speak of me as I am⁴¹; nothing extenuate,
 Nor set down aught in malice: then must you speak
 Of one, that lov'd not wisely, but too well;
 Of one, not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
 Perplex'd in the extreme; of one, whose hand,
 Like the base Júdean⁴², threw a pearl away,

⁴¹ Thus the folio. The quarto reads—'Speak of *them* as *they* are.'

⁴² The quarto 1622 reads—*Indian*. The folio has *Judean*. Warburton, Theobald, and Dr. Farmer think that the allusion is to Herod, who in a fit of blind jealousy threw away such a *jewel* in his wife Mariamne. Steevens admits the reading *Judean*, but thinks the allusion is not to the story of Herod, on account of the epithet *base*; and because 'the simile appears almost too apposite to be used on the occasion, and would be little more than bringing the fact into comparison with itself.' He thinks that the allusion is to the story of a Jew who not being able to find a purchaser for a very large pearl at an immoderate price, publicly threw it into the sea at Venice. Malone once objected to *Júdean* on account of the wrong accent, but subsequently changed his opinion, and thought the word *tribe* strongly favoured that reading. To this Mr. Boswell replies, that the word *tribe* was never alone peculiarly applicable to the Jews, but meant *a kindred*, and is constantly used at this day in speaking of a peculiar race or set of *Indians*. That the early travellers are full of descriptions of 'the pearled treasures' of the Indians, who may be called *base* on account of their ignorance, and the facility with which they would part with them, a circumstance to which two succeeding poets have alluded:—

'So the *unskilfull Indian* those *bright gems*
 Which might adde majestie to diadems,
 Mong the wave scatters.'

Habington—To Castara weeping.

Thus also in *The Woman's Conquest*, by Sir Robert Howard:—

'———— Behold my queen—
 Who with no more concern I'll cast away
 Than *Indians* do a pearl, that ne'er did know
 Its value.'

Shakspeare himself connects *India* with *pearls* in *Troilus and Cressida*:—

'Her bed is *India*, where she lies a *pearl*.'

It is here figuratively used for a *fair woman*. I conclude with Mr. Boswell, that the arguments are strong in favour of *Indian*, the reading of the earliest copy.

Richer than all his tribe; of one, whose subdu'd eyes,
 Albeit unused to the melting mood,
 Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
 Their medicinal gum: Set you down this:
 And say, besides,—that in Aleppo once,
 Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk⁴³
 Beat a Venetian, and traduc'd the state,
 I took by the throat the circumcised dog,
 And smote him—thus. [*Stabs himself.*]

Lod. O bloody period!

Gra. All, that's spoke, is marr'd.

Oth. I kiss'd thee, ere I kill'd thee;—No way but
 this, [*Falling upon DESDEMONA.*]
 Killing myself, to die upon a kiss. [*Dies.*]

Cas. This did I fear, but thought he had no
 weapon;

For he was great of heart.

Lod. O Spartan dog⁴⁴,
 More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea!
 Look on the tragick loading of this bed;

[*To IAGO.*]

This is thy work: the object poisons sight;—
 Let it be hid. Gratiano, keep the house,
 And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,
 For they succeed to you.—To you, lord governor,
 Remains the censure⁴⁵ of this hellish villain;
 The time, the place, the torture,—O enforce it!
 Myself will straight aboard; and, to the state,
 This heavy act with heavy heart relate. [*Exeunt.*]

⁴³ It is said that it was immediate death for a Christian to strike a Turk in Aleppo.

⁴⁴ The dogs of Spartan race were reckoned among those of the most fierce and savage kind.

⁴⁵ i. e. judgment, the sentence.

THE beauties of this play impress themselves so strongly upon the attention of the reader, that they can draw no aid from critical illustration. The fiery openness of Othello, magnanimous, artless, and credulous, boundless in his confidence, ardent in his affection, inflexible in his resolution, and obdurate in his revenge; the cool malignity of Iago, silent in his resentment, subtle in his designs, and studious at once of his interest and his vengeance; the soft simplicity of Desdemona, confident of merit, and conscious of innocence, her artless perseverance in her suit, and her slowness to suspect that she can be suspected, are such proofs of Shakspeare's skill in human nature, as, I suppose, it is vain to seek in any modern writer. The gradual progress which Iago makes in the Moor's conviction, and the circumstances which he employs to enflame him, are so artfully natural, that though it will perhaps not be said of him as he says of himself, 'that he is *a man not easily jealous*, yet we cannot but pity him, when at last we find him *perplexed in the extreme*.

There is always danger, lest wickedness, conjoined with abilities, should steal upon esteem, though it misses of approbation; but the character of Iago is so conducted, that he is from the first scene to the last hated and despised.

Even the inferior characters of this play would be very conspicuous in any other piece, not only for their justness, but their strength. Cassio is brave, benevolent, and honest, ruined only by his want of stubbornness to resist an insidious invitation. Roderigo's suspicious credulity, and impatient submission to the cheats which he sees practised upon him, and which by persuasion he suffers to be repeated, exhibit a strong picture of a weak mind betrayed by unlawful desires to a false friend; and the virtue of Emilia is such as we often find, worn loosely, but not cast off, easy to commit small crimes, but quickened and alarmed at atrocious villanies.

The scenes from the beginning to the end are busy, varied by happy interchanges, and regularly promoting the progression of the story; and the narrative in the end, though it tells but what is known already, yet is necessary to produce the death of Othello.

Had the scene opened in Cyprus, and the preceding incidents been occasionally related, there had been little wanting to a drama of the most exact and scrupulous regularity.

JOHNSON.

To Dr. Johnson's admirable and nicely discriminative character of Othello, it may seem unnecessary to make any addition; yet I cannot forbear to conclude our commentaries on this transcendent poet, with the fine eulogy which the judicious and learned

Lowth has pronounced on him, with a particular reference to this tragedy, perhaps *the most perfect* of his works:—

In his viris [tragediæ Græcæ scilicet scriptoribus] accessio quædam Philosophiæ erat Poetica facultas: neque sane quisquam adhuc Poesin ad fastigium suum ac culmen evexit, nisi qui prius in intima Philosophia artis suæ fundamenta jecerit.

Quod si quis objiciat, nonnullos in hoc poeseos genere excelsisse, qui nunquam habiti sunt Philosophi, ac ne literis quidem præter cæteros imbuti; sciat is, me rem ipsam quærere, non de vulgari opinione, aut de verbo laborare: *qui autem tantum ingenio consecutus est, ut naturas hominum, vimque omnem humanitatis, causasque eas, quibus aut incitatur mentis impetus aut retunditur, penitus perspectas habeat, ejusque omnes motus oratione non modo explicet, sed effingat planeque oculis subjiciat; sed excitet, regat, commoveat, moderetur; eum, etsi disciplinarum instrumento munus adjutum eximie tamen esse Philosophum arbitrari.* Quo in genere affectum zelotypiæ, ejusque causas, adjuncta, progressiones, effectus, in una SHAKSPEARI nostri fabula, copiosus, subtilius, accuratius etiam veriusque pertractari existimo, quam ab omnibus omnium Philosophorum scholis in simili argumento, est unquam disputatum. [Prælectio prima, edit. 1763, p. 8.]—MALONE.

If by 'the most perfect' is meant the *most regular* of the foregoing plays, I subscribe to Mr. Malone's opinion; but if his words were designed to convey a more exalted praise, without a moment's hesitation I should transfer it to Macbeth.

It is true that the domestic tragedy of Othello affords room for a various and forcible display of character. The less familiar groundwork of Macbeth (as Dr. Johnson has observed) excludes the influence of peculiar dispositions. That exclusion, however, is recompensed by a loftier strain of poetry, and by events of higher rank; by supernatural agency, by the solemnities of incantation, by shades of guilt and horror deepening in their progress, and by visions of futurity selected in aid of hope, but eventually the ministers of despair.

Were it necessary to weigh the pathetick effusions of these dramas against each other, it is generally allowed that the sorrows of Desdemona would be more than counterbalanced by those of Macduff. Yet if our author's rival pieces (the distinct property of their subjects considered) are written with equal force, it must still be admitted that the latter has more of originality. A novel of considerable length (perhaps amplified and embellished by the English translator of it) supplied a regular and circumstantial outline for Othello; while a few slight hints collected from separate narratives of Holinshed, were expanded into the sublime and awful tragedy of Macbeth.

Should readers, who are alike conversant with the appropriate

excellences of poetry and painting, pronounce on the reciprocal merits of these great productions, I must suppose that they would describe them as of different pedigrees. They would add, that one was of the school of Raphael, the other from that of Michael Angelo; and that if the steady Sophocles and Virgil should have decided in favour of Othello, the remonstrances of the daring Æschylus and Homer would have claimed the laurel for Macbeth.

To the sentiments of Dr. Lowth respecting the tragedy of Othello, a general eulogium on the dramattick works of Shakspeare, imputed by a judicious and amiable critic to Milton, may not improperly be subjoined:—

There is good reason to suppose (says my late friend the Rev. Thomas Warton) that Milton threw many additions and corrections into the *Theatrum Poetarum*, a book published by his nephew Edward Philips in 1675. It contains criticisms far above the taste of that period. Among these is the following judgment on Shakspeare, which was not then I believe the general opinion:—‘In tragedy, never any expressed a more lofty and tragick height, never any represented nature more purely to the life; and where the polishments of art are most wanting, as probably his learning was not extraordinary, he pleases with a certain *wild* and *native* elegance.’—*Milton’s Minor Poems*, p. 194, *Note on l’Allegro*.

What greater praise can any poet have received, than that of the author of *Paradise Lost*?

STEEVENS.

THE END.



CLOWN, WITH PIPE AND TABOR.

See vol. i. p. 345.

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